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THE RESULTS of the Saar plebiscite come as a severe shock to those who had hoped for a heavy vote of protest against Nazi rule in the Reich. While a decisive German victory had been expected, no one except the Nazis themselves had predicted such an overwhelming triumph. To what extent the poll represents a direct indorsement of Hitler and to what extent it merely reflects the fact that Saarlanders are Germans—and proud of it—is impossible to ascertain from this distance. Fear, intimidation, and subterranean pressure doubtless affected many voters, while others may have simply desired to be on the band-wagon. Nevertheless, the fact remains that in an election which was as free as it could possibly have been made, with able neutral supervision and with every material advantage favoring a status quo vote, the inhabitants of the Saar indicated a desire to pass under Nazi rule by a majority almost identical with that which Hitler obtained in the German plebiscite last summer. The brunt of the defeat will naturally fall on the 9 per cent who had the courage and integrity to vote against return to Germany. As indicated in the dispatch from our special correspondent, which appears on another page, tens of thousands of these will choose the rigors of exile rather than risk the terror of Nazi concentration camps, or will continue the opposition underground. If it were not for the plight of this minority, we should derive at least a measure of satisfaction from the prospect of a speedy and permanent settlement of the whole problem of the Saar. In the face of such an overwhelming expression of opinion it is inconceivable that the League should act otherwise than to restore the territory to Germany at an early date. Certainly no other action would be consistent with the peace of Europe.

WHATEVER the Supreme Court decides in the gold-clause case, it has pushed the judiciary into the forefront as an equal third in the American scheme of government. In doing so it is giving Washington a fright comparable only to the dark days in London before England abandoned the gold standard. The questions asked by some justices indicated, as much as such questions can, that they were not being convinced of the constitutionality of the government's gold policy. If the court sustains the gold clause, the effects will be far-reaching indeed. Washington, of course, is alarmed, and its estimate of the consequences may be exaggerated. The national debt, it is stated, would rise by seventeen billions, and give a direct stimulus to inflation. Corporations with gold bonds would have to pay $1.69 for every $1 now owing, affecting obligations estimated by Attorney General Cummings at a hundred billions. And corporations unable to raise the additional 69 cents would be thrown into bankruptcy, their property would fall to first-mortgage holders, and all second mortgages would be wiped out. Many people cannot believe the court will stand by the Constitution if it throws the country into such chaos, and yet if that is not the intention they cannot understand why such questions were asked. They were anything but reassured by the oil decision, which we discuss on another page, and can only conclude that the court has an idea that the Constitution is in even greater danger from future Presidents than from the present one, and that timely precautions must be taken.

IN THEORY the Administration would not be utterly paralyzed by an unfavorable decision. The President could declare an emergency under the remaining vestiges of the war-time powers of his office. (The thought of the Supreme Court precipitating a national emergency is a novelty in American life.) This would give him a breathing spell, during which Congress might rush through an amendment of the Constitution to be hurried for immediate action to the state legislatures, most of them now in session. Or the President could ask Congress to increase the number of justices on the court, and appoint enough men ready to give his Administration legal standing, though this strikes us as a repugnant idea. Or legislation might be drafted to meet the precise objections of the court if its decision is worded with a helpful eye to redrafting. A further possibility is to restore the gold content of the dollar, for which there is now gold enough, though this would initiate a new era of deflation, which, however brief, would certainly give the coun-

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try an undesirable sense of defeat. An adverse decision would appear to seal the fate of all the rest of the New Deal legislation, and the country would be rubbing its nose in the fact that the Constitution is not suited to modern needs. If this could be done without a panic it might be a tremendous boon. We must confess that we cannot believe the Supreme Court will assert itself to this extent. But we also did not believe the justices would ask questions in public in a way to bring the capital to the brink of panic.

ONCE MORE rumors are afloat of impending negotiations for currency stabilization. This time it is suggested that France is seeking a slight devaluation of the franc as part of a general stabilization pact. From the standpoint of the gold bloc some action is imperative. In the face of relentless competition from the countries which have depreciated their currencies, economic conditions in France, Belgium, Holland, and Italy have grown worse in the past year. For these countries it is a choice between international stabilization and a unilateral devaluation of their own currencies that would accentuate the existing chaos. No solution can be worked out without the whole-hearted cooperation of the United States. Great Britain would unquestionably assent to stabilization of the pound if assured that the basis of stabilization would be the true purchasing-power parity of the respective currencies and not an artificial figure arrived at through a prolonged currency war. But it cannot be expected to sanction an arrangement which will crystallize the present competitive advantage held by the United States. Stabilization in itself, moreover, would be practically meaningless unless accompanied by an agreement to lower trade barriers, settle war debts, and resume international lending. In each case the United States, as the chief creditor, alone is in a position to take the initiative for the restoration of sanity.

THE EXTENT of the Administration's rightward trend is evident from such advance information as is available regarding its security program. While details have not yet been made public, we know from Secretary Perkins's announcement that no federal funds will be used either for unemployment or old-age insurance. Both projects are to be financed and administered by the individual states, guided by standards drafted by Congress. Not only will this lead to a considerable discrepancy in the actual protection given by the different states, but it will place an inequitable burden on the poorer states, particularly those in the South. Moreover, if Speaker Byrns is correct in stating that the total federal expenditures for old-age pensions, child and maternity care, and the expansion of public-health activities will not exceed $100,000,000 in the coming year, the protection afforded will be but a drop in the bucket in comparison with immediate needs. Fortunately there is hope that Congress will go farther than the Administration toward the formulation of adequate security legislation. Representative Connery, chairman of the House Labor Committee, which is to consider the security bills, has declared himself in favor of the Lundeen bill, thus making it possible that the Administration will be unable to get its own measure reported out of committee unless it agrees to more satisfactory provision for the eleven million persons now unemployed.

HUEY LONG can congratulate himself on the ease with which he has become a national figure. Congress had just convened when he served notice that he would attack the Administration for withholding federal expenditure in Louisiana, and the Administration withdrew from its stand. He attacked it instead for being allied with interests profiting from prostitution in New Orleans, which sounded more extravagant in Washington than in Louisiana, where the patronage policy of Washington has made for a strange fellowship between a liberal President and unworthy political henchmen. Meanwhile Long has won an 18 per cent decrease in residential electricity rates in his state and made a spectacular settlement with Standard Oil, remitting most of the occupational tax passed in December in return for a correspondingly larger use of Louisiana oil in Standard's local refineries. N.B.C. gave him an uncensored session over one of its networks to bedevil the President for not keeping his word and for playing about with the Astors and partners of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and let him make promises and poetry about his "Share Our Wealth" program. The Associated Press then carried an interview in which Huey at last refers to his candidacy for President. "I would rather see my laws passed than be President," he declared, "but passage of the laws is the only way they can keep me from being President if I want to be, unless I die." The extra pressure for publicity looks like a bid for advance sympathy if new indictments are brought in for income-tax evasion in Louisiana, but Huey's race for the Presidency has clearly begun.

BY TRACING the location of Chiang Kai-shek's alleged victories over the "Communist-bandits," it is evident that the main body of the Chinese Red Army has virtually completed its dramatic march from the province of Kiangsi to that of Szechuan. Cut off from necessary supplies by a blockade imposed by Nanking and faced with the prospect of severe losses from bombardment by Chiang's American-built airplanes, the Communists apparently decided in midsummer to withdraw entirely from Kiangsi, where Soviet districts had existed for six years. Abandoning their former capital, Juichin, in November, the Red Army, accompanied by tens of thousands of local peasants, marched more than a thousand miles westward through Hunan and northern Kwangsi into Kweichow. There, a few weeks ago, they threatened to capture the provincial capital. Turned back from this city, they crossed the Yangtze into Szechuan, where Soviet rule has been established for more than a year in certain areas. In view of the relatively isolated position of Szechuan and Kweichow and their wealth of natural resources, Soviet forces may have a better opportunity to develop a stable government than would have been possible in Kiangsi. But whatever the outcome, the thousand-mile trek of the Red Army through the heart of China must go down as one of the heroic feats of modern history.

FRANK W. SMITH, president of the New York Edison Company, issued a statement to the public on December 24 in the form of a paid advertisement in the press. Representing not only the various electric-light companies of the city but also the Consolidated Gas Company, Mr. Smith indulged in a public exhibition of hand-wringing that should have reduced to tears all but the most hardened of

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his audience. Mr. Smith, of course, was discussing the question of rates to utility users in New York, with particular reference to Mayor LaGuardia's proposal to build a municipal light-and-power plant. Among other things he said: "The millions of holders of insurance policies that are in part secured by investments made in these securities with the approval of the State of New York, have a *stake* [italics Mr. Smith's] in this situation and are endangered by this idea of cutting rates or building duplicating plants." On January 10, or a little more than a fortnight later, Floyd L. Carlisle, chairman of the board of the Consolidated Gas Company and the New York Edison Company, made another statement to the public. But in the meantime Something Had Happened. Mr. Carlisle, and presumably his associate Mr. Smith, had seen a great light. Speaking still, one assumes, for the millions of investors who have a *stake* in the question of cutting rates, Mr. Carlisle said: "Because the undersigned . . . are convinced that the prosperity and convenience of this metropolitan community require an increased use of their service at *lowered rates* [italics ours] . . . Because the companies know that substantial *decrease in electric rates* can be brought about almost immediately..." and so on. The solemnity with which this complete about-face is presented is one of the bright spots in an otherwise dreary world.

WHAT PROBABLY HAPPENED is that some bright boy in the office sat down and read through the Washington plan for reduced power rates and reported to Mr. Smith and to Mr. Carlisle that since the utilities companies were at present about on a par with the man-eating shark in general popularity, it might be just as well to take a chance on the new plan, particularly since it seemed not unlikely that there would be more money in it in the long run. But Mayor LaGuardia does not seem to be impressed by Mr. Carlisle's change of heart. He is still interested less in whether or not the power companies make more money than in—as he puts it concretely—how much Mrs. Finkelstein and Mrs. Pugliese and Mrs. Jones pay for electric current. So far Mr. Smith and Mr. Carlisle have not been very clear about that. But it is encouraging to know that their hearts are in the right place (just behind their pocket-books, that is) and that if the wicked municipal government with the support of the misguided federal government is going ahead with gestures in the direction of a municipal power plant, the utilities companies can do their parts, too, like little men. When Dr. Alton Smahl got a verdict of $5.40 against the New York Telephone Company for overcharges, the delight of the populace knew no bounds; if Mayor LaGuardia succeeds in forcing down the utility rates even half as far as they ought to be forced down, the heavens will ring with rejoicing and jubilation.

THE CASES against the fourteen men charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government under the Illinois state treason law did not go to trial. That preposterous charge was dropped by George Hall, state's attorney of Montgomery County, and the defendants were freed on paroles based upon pleas of guilty to the infinitely milder charge of "conspiracy to commit an unlawful act." There can be no other interpretation than that this was a victory for the defendants. Prior to their acceptance of this compromise, the prosecutor proposed that they take sentences of one year at the state penal farm under the treason law. Meeting in open court, the defendants voted this down and asked that the trial go on. Mr. Hall thereupon agreed to drop the treason charges. The truth is that he was glad to get out of the situation, gracefully if possible, but to get out in any event. Working people in Montgomery County are solidly opposed to the prosecution of persons taking part in relief demonstrations under a forgotten statute carrying severe penalties. The conservative element, with an eye on the county coffers and reckoning the cost of a long-drawn-out trial, decided that it was not worth the expense, particularly in view of the virtual impossibility of getting convictions on the original charge. This forced retreat of over-zealous local authorities in Lincoln's state ought to warn other communities to think before they act.

What Does the Supreme Court Mean?

"IF Section 9-c were held valid, it would be idle to pretend anything would be left of limitations upon the power of the Congress to delegate its lawmaking function. . . . The question is not of the intrinsic importance of the particular statute before us, but of the constitutional processes of legislation which are an essential part of our system of government." So said Chief Justice Hughes of the Supreme Court in striking down a section of the National Industrial Recovery Act in the first case before that court testing this act. So said seven of the other eight justices, Justice Cardozo alone dissenting.

For the layman the applicability of these principles to the facts before the court is a matter of first importance, since what this decision foreshadows as to the Recovery Act as a whole, the gold clause, and the wide range of new legislation may be the destruction of nearly two years' building by the Administration.

In making such an evaluation one has to start at the beginning. What was Section 9-c of the Recovery Act? In striking contrast with the broad scope of most of the act, this section of only two or three lines simply "authorized the President to prohibit the transportation in interstate and foreign commerce of petroleum or the products thereof" produced in violation of state law. The reason that it was passed is equally simple and undisputed. For three or four years streams of "hot" oil—oil produced in violation of state conservation laws—had gushed from the great oil fields of Oklahoma City and East Texas in such volume as to render the operations within those fields a nightmare of roaring gas, wild wells, burning oil, and wasteful use. All fair competition in the oil industry was demoralized by the bootleg prices at which hot oil or its products were sold. Indeed, at the time when the Recovery Act was before Congress, bootleg oil had smashed the price of all oil to a few cents a barrel, and hiding behind federal-court injunctions which had denied to states the right to control the interstate movements of illegal oil, the "hot" oiler was writing his chapter of graft, corruption, thievery, and waste in a way to make the Teapot Dome scandal look trivial.

But when the Supreme Court cast its judicial eye upon

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Section 9-c, these were not the facts upon which it focused. Rather it was upon the words in the book. And since these words did not express a flat Congressional command prohibiting hot-oil movements but only "authorized" the President "to prohibit," the court held that Congress had unconstitutionally tried to delegate its lawmaking power. Then, as if to buttress a somewhat doubtful point, it added that even if the act were not fatally defective on this score, the President in his executive order failed to make a "finding" that the prohibition was necessary to accomplish the purposes of the act.

Turning first to the matter of "finding," is this a matter of substance or is it just legal hocus-pocus? Any government law clerk could answer this one. He has one form for "proclamations" which include "findings," and another for "executive orders" without "findings." Proclamations read, "Whereas . . . Whereas . . . Whereas . . . *I find . . . Now Therefore* it is hereby ordered." Executive orders read, "By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Act of Congress, etc. . . . It is hereby ordered, etc." Both proclamations and executive orders are written according to form by a $2,500-a-year clerk. Surely it would be absurd to turn grave matters of national policy upon such a technicality of wording, particularly when the statute nowhere required such a "finding." As sensibly expressed by Justice Cardozo in his dissenting opinion, "One will not find such restrictions either in the statute itself or in the Constitution back of it. The Constitution of the United States is not a code of civil practice."

But what about the court's more serious charge that the structure of our government was endangered? Reduced to the facts of this case, Justice Cardozo's dissent shows this to be just plain nonsense. Congress told the President specifically and definitely *what* he could prohibit—hot oil—and *where* he could prohibit it—in interstate commerce; it left him only one narrow bit of discretion—*when* he could prohibit, to be exercised presumably when he found national recovery demanded it.

Moreover, it is significant, there was less delegation to the President in Section 9-c than in almost any other New Deal legislation. In the Recovery Act the President is empowered to approve codes dealing with thousands of commodities in a thousand different ways. His powers under the public-works program and under the Agricultural Adjustment Act are likewise extensive. In the matter of monetary standards he may decide when devaluation shall take place and in addition how much. And it is interesting that none of the executive orders dealing with gold recite the magic word "finding." If all these acts must go down, our economic structure might go with them.

But possibly the court will find another logic. The existence of a dissenting opinion proves there are at least two lines of applicable legal logic even to this extremely simple set of facts. Indeed, we find the internal logic of Justice Cardozo's opinion more persuasive, even as a matter of marshaling the ancient precedents, than the majority opinion. In so far as abstract law is concerned, the court could have selected the logic of Cardozo just as well as that of the majority opinion. Since the logic of the dissent was before the whole court before the majority opinion was issued, something more than mere legal logic impelled the majority to reach its decision. What were the real reasons in the minds of the majority? The court has not told us. Nor has it told the host of federal district judges throughout the nation in whose hands the trial of cases and the enforcement of the whole scheme of recovery legislation really rests. And few district judges will dare to permit the enforcement of these laws before the Supreme Court gives those reasons.

All that can be hoped is that those members of the court who have heretofore stood for a realistic approach to the law will agree with Justice Cardozo in one passage of his dissent: "Under these decisions, the separation of powers between the Executive and Congress is not a doctrinaire concept to be made use of with pedantic rigor. There must be sensible approximation, there must be elasticity of judgment, in response to the practical necessities of government, which cannot foresee today the developments of tomorrow in their nearly infinite variety."

Our Navy Madness

THERE was no more encouraging passage in President Roosevelt's annual message to Congress than his positive assurance: "I believe, however, that our own peaceful and neighborly attitude toward other nations is coming to be understood and appreciated. . . . Evidence of our persistent and undeniable desire to prevent armed conflict has recently been more than once afforded. *There is no ground for apprehension that our relations with any other nation will be otherwise than peaceful*" (italics ours). Immediately after giving this assurance, the President sent to Congress a budget message which calls for the greatest army and navy appropriations in peace time in our history. It provides no less than $870,922,292 for both services. Deducting the non-military expenditures of the War Department (rivers and harbors and the Panama Canal), there is still left the stupendous sum of $800,369,658, of which $488,133,847 goes to the navy for strictly naval purposes and $312,235,811 to the army for purely military purposes. In the face of the depression, when every other regular department is being skimped, the army and navy are to receive enormous increases.

Since the PWA spent $150,000,000 last year on ships—a neat way of outwitting Congress and increasing the appropriations without that body's constitutional sanction—the actual naval increase is less than appears from a comparison of the regular naval appropriations. These have none the less jumped enormously. In 1916 the sum was only $153,853,567. Then came our entry into the war and in 1919 the high point of $2,002,310,785; since then the lowest figure has been $312,743,410, in 1926. In 1930 it rose again to $374,165,639. Thereafter, until Mr. Roosevelt took office, some effort was made to hold down expenditures, the 1933 figure being $349,732,213. But the former Assistant Secretary of the Navy has come to the rescue. The increase for the fiscal year 1935-36 over 1933-34 will not be less than $138,401,634, or 39.5 per cent. Not until the World War came did our *total* naval expenditures reach the sum of $139,000,000. Indeed, *all the expenditures* of the federal government for 1916-17 were only $734,056,202, or $66,340,456 less than we are to spend on army and navy alone in the coming fiscal year! Could anything illustrate more

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clearly what the World War accomplished in the way of a permanent increase of government outlays for regular services—aside from emergency reconstruction and relief?

If we turn to the number of officers and men authorized, we find that in the year 1905, during the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, we had 2,252 officers and 30,804 men. Ten years later the force had grown to 3,780 officers and 52,562 men. Passing over the war years, we had 8,625 officers and 119,205 men in 1921. Thereafter came a sharp drop, but the average number of enlisted men from 1925 to 1930 was about 84,000, with the number of officers steadily rising until in 1932 we had 9,423. The proposal now made to Congress is that the total number of enlisted men shall be brought up to 93,500, with a further increase of officers to well above 10,000, as it is specified that in future all graduates of the Naval Academy shall be commissioned, instead of a number being returned to private life as is the case today. By July 1, 1936, then, we shall have at least 105,000 officers and men in the navy and withdrawn from productive life, which is as many as were carried on the rolls in the war year 1917—this alongside a regular army of 131,578 men and officers.

Our readers do not need to be reminded that this fleet enlargement is accompanied by no explanation except that the President and the Navy Department have decided to build the fleet up to the limits of the London treaty. Nor has there been any announcement of a change of foreign policy, national or naval. The candid mind must surely admit that in the face of this the people of Japan are to be pardoned if they show extreme restlessness and decide to arm with corresponding speed, especially in view of the announcement by Admiral Reeves that this year the American fleet will hold its annual maneuvers near the coast of Japan—according to the press, it will be a "vast armada, the largest and most powerful by a wide margin ever assembled under a single command in the world's naval history." Have not the American people some right to be told by the President why all this is going on? We know very well that it is defended by some members of the Cabinet on the ground that it gives more employment for our unemployed youth and shipyard workers. But the fact remains that while pretending to be a pacifist and non-militarist nation we are bent on outstripping the rest of the world in naval expenditure.

It is idle to deny that fear of a conflict with Japan helps to make Congress vote these large appropriations. But that is the way to provoke war, not to preserve peace. If proof of this were called for, one need only point to the German and British naval rivalry prior to the World War, which was so potent a factor in bringing on that struggle. Every time we move toward increasing our armaments there is a corresponding demand on the part of British jingoes and admirals for further increases of their fleet. Thus on November 14, 1933—to cite only one case—the First Lord of the Admiralty, in explaining why the British naval-construction program had been changed in the direction of heavier ships, officially declared that the change had been made simply and solely because of the action of the United States and Japan in laying down more cruisers. Yet our government, especially its representative in the disarmament talks at London, has deliberately refused the Japanese proposal to cut all the fleets from a 5-5-3 ratio to a 2-2-2. Is it not time for the American people to demand not only an explanation but a clear-cut statement from the government on just what its plans for the defense of the United States are, whether it intends to take the offensive in war, or whether it seriously means to urge upon the world the adoption of President Roosevelt's proposal, in his speech to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation on December 28, 1933? This was that the countries pledge themselves to build no more offensive weapons and sign an international pact guaranteeing this and embodying their sacred promise never to send their armed forces across their own boundaries.

France, Italy, and Abyssinia

FURTHER details of the Franco-Italian agreement make it clear that Abyssinia is expected to pay the price for Italian political concession in Europe. Not that Abyssinian sovereignty is to be openly or immediately sacrificed to Italian imperial ambitions. International politics no longer operate on quite so crude a basis. There is no definite clause in the Franco-Italian pact promising Italy a free hand in Africa; but by ceding to the Italian colony of Eritrea a small strip of the coast of French Somaliland, which will provide an outlet on the Gulf of Aden, and by granting Rome part ownership in the French-controlled railway to Abbis Ababa, capital of Abyssinia, France has given both moral and physical support to Italy in its dispute with the African kingdom.

What effect this will have on Abyssinia's appeal to the League under Article XI of the Covenant is not yet clear, but there is grave danger that the appeal will receive considerably less than justice from the leading powers. For one thing, Abyssinia appears to be an ideal scapegoat. Its government is notoriously corrupt, and its alleged connivance in the slave trade gives a good excuse for the extension of the purifying influence of European culture and morality. The fact that this trade could not exist without the protection of certain European governments may, of course, be conveniently forgotten. Moreover, the immediate interests of the powers most directly involved lie on the side of Italy rather than Abyssinia. In the case of France, which was the original sponsor of Abyssinian membership in the League, the shift in support is due to its paramount concern with European problems. Great Britain, on the other hand, has long been aligned with Italy in this region. As early as December, 1925, the two governments reached an understanding in which each agreed to place no obstacle in the way of the other's economic objectives in Abyssinia. The British are particularly interested in tapping the waters of Lake Tsana for the irrigation of the Sudan and have cast a somewhat covetous eye on the fertile valleys of southern Ethiopia, which are said to be admirably adapted for the raising of cotton. Italy's interests lie more to the north, where it has been engaged in building a railway connecting Eritrea with Italian Somaliland. Although the Anglo-Italian agreement has never been carried into effect, owing to Abyssinia's protests at Geneva, it is doubtless one of the factors which have caused Tory opinion in Britain to back Italy in the present controversy.

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An additional factor in stirring up anti-Abyssinian feeling in Great Britain has been the playing up in the British press of greatly exaggerated reports of Japanese influence in the African state. These rumors have in part grown out of the projected Abyssinian-Japanese royal marriage, which was abandoned because of the opposition of Italy and the other powers. But they have been nourished more specifically by the recent spectacular expansion in Japanese textile exports to Abyssinia and neighboring regions, which has hit both Lancashire and Italy. Additional anxiety was created by the rumor, as yet unconfirmed, that a Japanese company had received a concession for an experiment in the raising of cotton. Reports printed in the Italian press that the Japanese are engaged in training the Abyssinian army smack suspiciously of deliberate propaganda, but have served further to prejudice British opinion.

While there is little likelihood of a falling out among the great powers over the question of Abyssinia, the situation is distinctly an unpalatable one. In refusing to arbitrate the Ualual incident and in demanding an apology and indemnity for the alleged insult to the Italian flag, Rome's attitude has been unpleasantly reminiscent of that adopted by Tokyo during the Manchurian affair of 1931. Should the powers give tacit approval to Italy's action, they will be striking a greater blow at the fundamental principles upon which the international peace machinery is based than was delivered by the failure to stem Japanese aggression in China. For in the case of the Manchurian incident it can at least be said that the League made an effort, though a belated and feeble one, to enforce existing international commitments. In the present instance there is serious danger that no action whatsoever will be taken, and that Abyssinia will be denied even the opportunity of bringing its case before the bar of world opinion. This obviously must not be allowed to happen. While the United States is not concerned in the immediate issues of the Italian-Abyssinian dispute, it might profitably, through Ambassador Davis, suggest that its future attitude toward the League cannot but be vitally affected by that body's handling of the present controversy.

Who Reads What —and Why

NEAR the beginning of the sixth century A.D. a Roman public official named Boethius was thrown into prison by his barbarian emperor, Theodoric the Ostrogoth. A few years later he was executed for alleged treason, but while still languishing in jail he wrote a book called "The Consolation of Philosophy" which was destined to be read with avidity for approximately one thousand years, or about three times as long as Shakespeare has yet been famous. The very title itself was a stroke of genius, because Boethius was writing near the beginning of a weary period during which thoughtful men were to despair of the world and to value most what enabled them either to escape from it or to endure a condition of life for which it seemed to them little could be done. Great faith in learning and letters as instruments for improving the world is a relatively modern thing. For at least a thousand years men read and studied chiefly to improve the soul or to seek "consolation."

Even today the motive continues to operate with what the more narrowly practical must regard as distressing frequency. Such, at least, is the impression one gets from reading a report made by Charles H. Compton, president of the American Library Association, concerning the readers of certain widely circulated books. He is interested chiefly in the "who" rather than the "why" of library patronage, but it is difficult to read what he has to say without realizing that even today most readers go to literature primarily for something which ranges from "consolation" to "pleasure."

Investigation seems to show that Mark Twain is by all odds the most popular "standard" author. At a given moment there may be more calls for the latest novel of Zane Grey, but the demand does not last very long, and of five libraries in five large cities all but the one in New York require more volumes by Mark Twain than by Sinclair Lewis, a distant rival. An analysis of 3,289 adult readers of the former in St. Louis shows, moreover, that they come from every walk of life and include, for example, two detectives, a pugilist, and an embalmer, as well as many skilled workmen and 317 unemployed. One would, perhaps, hardly expect Mark Twain to be read for definite instruction, and it is true that passing reference to doctrine is more frequently met with in letters regarding more explicitly tendentious writers. Nevertheless, letters from readers of Carl Sandburg, William James, Thomas Hardy, and Bernard Shaw contain, on the whole, surprisingly few indications that these authors are read primarily for their teaching. A waitress likes best Sandburg's lines: "Shake back your hair, O red-headed girl. Let go your laughter and keep your two proud freckles on your chin"; an unemployed man likes Mark Twain's books about Missouri and the Mississippi River because "I can almost see the places and the boats he mentions"; a student in a Negro high school confides, "I, like Hardy, believe that man is least important and that nature is all supreme."

Mr. Compton's researches seem fully to substantiate his contention that, whatever the reason, it is the "plain man" who keeps the standard authors alive so far as the libraries are concerned. Perhaps the upper classes have good libraries of their own; perhaps an unnamed college president was right, in his facts at least, when he proclaimed over the radio that colleges now prepare students for all the professions from automobile mechanic to dressmaker, but that the day of classical education is, thank God, over. Yet the Greek classics in translation are taken out of the library and read by, for example, an insurance man, a commercial artist, and a newspaperman, if not by members of the learned professions. Seven hundred persons recently borrowed books by Thomas Hardy from the St. Louis library. Among them were only four lawers, one doctor, and one dentist. But there were ninety-one stenographers, ninety-six sales persons, and a scattering of mechanics, policemen, taxi-drivers, pipe-fitters, and blacksmiths. Doubtless these men belong to some sort of an élite, and it is hardly likely that pipe-fitters as a class read much Hardy. But if they are members of an aristocracy it is not one of wealth, education, or social position. Neither, on the other hand, do they seem for the most part to be protestants or rebels. They are seekers after "the consolation of philosophy."

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Issues and Men

The Russian Murders Again

NUMEROUS letters of protest and congratulation have come to me in regard to my comment in *The Nation* of December 26 on the slaughter of men and women in Russia as the result of the assassination of Kirov. The protests have come from Communists and from some well-wishers of the Russian experiment, and the vehemence with which they write makes me suspect they realize what infinite damage Stalin has done to the cause they hold dear by the summary execution of 125 persons accused of taking part in the "conspiracy." The language of these protests is extraordinarily like that of the letters in defense of the Hitler purge of June 30, which have been coming out of Germany ever since. Even when insisting, as they do, that there is all the difference in the world between the summary executions of Hitler and those of Stalin, they use exactly the same arguments. Here is one letter:

> Boiled down, the question seems to be which is the more important, the lives of a few dastards or the attempt of the U. S. S. R. to develop a new social order? I should not say "attempt," but rather an achievement beside which any former attainment pales into insignificance, and to class anything that is done in Soviet Russia with the mere brute instinct displayed in Nazi Germany is to be absurdly prejudiced in favor of Hitler. Do you see no difference between "Heil Hitler!" and the tenets of communistic philosophy? Does not what one is working *for* and *toward* count?

In the first place, this letter closely parallels one I received from Heidelberg, in which the writer, also a woman, wrote:

> These men were villainous and were unfaithful to the *Führer* and the great cause of National Socialism. Why should they not have been removed at once since they were obstacles to the achievement of a united, ennobled, and worthy Germany, able to hold its head up with any nation of the earth?

In the second place, I should like to remind the writer of the first letter that the National Socialist program as outlined to the German people went farther in the direction of the Bolshevik program than any other that I have ever seen; that intensifies the parallel. But above and beyond details like this, I must again affirm, with all the emphasis and earnestness of which I am capable, that any government which stoops to wholesale murder to defend itself betrays its own weakness and enormously damages its cause.

Moreover, when any government finds it absolutely necessary to try the alleged miscreants in complete secrecy, without allowing any of the facts to come out either to its own people or to the world, it admits that it is too shaky to have the public know the whole base truth. From time immemorial the world has protested against summary or secret courts martial or court trials, and against immediate execution of those condemned to death. Men and women everywhere throughout the centuries have insisted upon open trials and the right of appeal to higher courts and, above all, on complete publicity; they have known that no government is justified in instituting secret trials and executions.

I, for one, deny the right of any government to butcher people as Hitler and Stalin have done, and I go farther and deny to any government the right to take human life, to commit the crime of murder, whether by judicial process or otherwise. Either the Commandment "Thou shalt not kill" means what it says, or it does not. If there are exceptions to it, it is meaningless. But waiving this for the moment, I deny that the difference in the aims of Hitler and Stalin has any effect upon the ethical considerations involved. Slaughter is slaughter, and remains such by whomever it is done. I certainly see nothing in the communist philosophy to warrant my saying that Stalin and his crowd stand outside the moral law, while Hitler and his gang must be judged according to it.

As I said before, the end never justifies the means, and no good social order can be established by bloodshed. But in Moscow and Berlin the despots insist that their way of life is so precious, their aims so ideal, that they are warranted in blotting out the lives of any who oppose them, or who are believed to oppose them. How does my correspondent know that these 125 dead Russian men and women are "dastards"? Has she seen the evidence? Has she heard from their friends? Not a bit of it. She has merely accepted the statement of a prostituted Russian government press, which does not differ in the slightest degree in its subservience and degradation from that of Hitler. She doubtless would not believe one official word that comes out of Germany as to the motives or actions of those whom Hitler put to death. I see no reason why I should believe *Pravda* or *Izvestia* any more than I believe the *Tageblatt* or the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. I know that they could not tell the truth if they wanted to do so.

The question remains: Can we uplift humanity at the cost of human flesh and blood? And how many "dastards" is an allegedly altruistic government to be allowed to kill anyhow? The Communists admit that no fewer than one million kulaks were torn from their homes and sent to Siberia, many of them to experiences worse than death. I heard a Communist orator say the other day that this exile of the kulaks was a "mere flea-bite of cruelty," but I am very sure that the million who suffered thought it something more than a "flea-bite." No, the world does not progress by murder, or by a violation of liberty, or by the vicarious suffering and death from persecution of multitudes. If American liberals had remained silent about these Russian outrages, they would have been debarred from ever speaking out against what is happening in Spain, Germany, and heaven knows how many other countries, or any miscarriage of justice in the United States. Wrong never yet made right, nor ever will.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Huey

Drawing by Eva Herrmann

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The Biggest Show on Earth

By MARGARET MARSHALL

Flemington, New Jersey, January 9

THE white courthouse of Hunterdon County is solid and staid with its hundred years as bookkeeper of the lives and misdemeanors of an ordinary American community. It has suddenly become a world arena because the simple routine attempt within its walls to discover and punish the kidnapper and murderer of a child has been found to release, at a profit, more human curiosity than any other current event in the entire world. That curiosity drifts like a heavy fog about the sedate outlines of the old building and through its well-used corridors; it hangs in the street outside and clings to every figure living or inanimate. Every word, every look, every action breathes curiosity, strong in its own right and kept at fever pitch by that old master of ceremonies, the press, whose most famous trained animals are taking part in this performance, trying to steal the show from the principals and from one another in what must surely be the battle of the century.

The raw material with which dealers in curiosity work mills about in the courthouse square, straining at ropes, craning at windows, talking to the cops; waiting hours on end for a glimpse of a juror, an attorney, Lindbergh, Mrs. Hauptmann, for any scrap from the table of fame, set though it is with one of the most sordid of crimes. (Last Sunday more than 4,000 sightseers went through the courthouse while a barker pointed out the sights. Children were set in the witness chair and in the chair that Hauptmann occupies and told not to forget.) The crowd flows out across the street and on to the long porch of the Union Hotel, which stands in its mid-Victorian small-town ugliness opposite the courthouse. There are men, women, and children, whole families. But there are more women than men and they are incomparably more business-like in their curiosity. A well-dressed, coarse-faced, heavy but securely corseted matron pushes through to the bright-blue-coated state trooper who has a cauliflower ear and was once a boxer. The woman is smiling and eager as she engages him in talk. And there is no lack of understanding here. Importantly he tells her that Lindbergh and Jafsie will be coming out a certain door, that this place, *his* beat, is the best place to see them. She settles down happily to wait. Only an hour now. The sun is trying to break through the fog. A patch of sky shows for a moment as blue as the trooper's uniform. "This is a big day, Jafsie's day," she comments brightly. "I guess Hauptmann's day will be a big day too. . . . I've been in you know. Yes, I was in two days, but it's harder to get in now. They're giving the preference to the local people. And that's only right of course. They pay the taxes."

Two elderly gray-haired women in fur coats, somebody's grandmothers, edge close to the trooper. They are good-humored and determined. "I want to see Jafsie," says one of them. "Jafsie's a jolly good fellow—and truthful and honest too, don't you think?" She looks at the trooper for confirmation. Jafsie seems by all odds the favorite among the crowds. Perhaps they feel that he too is an ordinary human being like themselves who succeeded in getting in on the most famous case in the world, although to begin with he had no more to do with it than they. The tale of Jafsie is another success story out of the land of opportunity where anybody can be President—or the star witness in a murder trial.

The fog closes in again, becomes a thick mist. But the hour for noon recess is approaching and the crowd thickens. The sound-news trucks, stationed before the courthouse, get ready. The great moment comes. The jury, nondescript in the manner of juries, files out and crosses the street to the hotel. The special writers, who can never look as impressive as their names, come past our blue-clad trooper, who murmurs their identity to his eager clientele. It could hardly be less dramatic. Yet this afternoon the crowds will gather again for the next adjournment, will stand in the rain and hope for a glimpse of Lindbergh, will swarm over his car as he drives away, will cheer, will call out as one young thing cried out, "Lucky Lindy!" As the crowd disperses for lunch or other possible excitements, a woman speaks up proudly: "I'm one of the 150 you know!" (one of the first 150 to get into the trial). It is a new kind of distinction. And it is something to talk about, for only 350 people can be packed into that small building. The sheriff who gives out passes is one of the stars in this all-star performance. (There are ugly rumors about the price of choice seats.) There is also a faint chance that a few without passes may be able to get in; and it is that faint chance which brings people to the courthouse every morning at two o'clock to wait eight hours until court opens at ten.

And what of the press? Circulation, as everybody knows, has been bad the last few months. There is more human interest in the Lindbergh case than in any other world event. The attempt to translate this human interest into circulation figures has made of Flemington a frenzied community with but a single thought. There are 700 newspapermen in the town, including 129 camera men. Two hundred newspapers have their own correspondents on the scene. Hearst heads the list with fifty representatives, including, appropriately enough, his star sports writer and his Hollywood expert. The Hearst press pays particular attention to Mrs. Hauptmann. Is this foresight? If her husband is convicted, she will certainly be the star as the wife of the "doomed man." The New York *World-Telegram* has eleven men on the case, the Philadelphia *Bulletin* nine. The population of Flemington, normally 2,800, has been augmented by some 1,200.

Western Union formerly handled its business in Flemington through the railroad station agent and one messenger boy. Today it has two offices and perhaps a hundred men in town, besides messenger boys. There are forty-five direct wires, including a direct cable to London. One of the direct wires goes to Halifax to serve the Canadian press. Dispatches are being filed to Australia and Buenos Aires. During the day dispatches are sent mainly from a wire room on the upper floor of the courthouse. For a ten-

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edition afternoon paper in New York City new leads must be shot out one after another with lightning speed. It is here that the real newspapermen are to be found. The "special writers" follow a more leisurely pace and have plenty of time to bask in the public eye. The night dispatches are filed in a room at the back of the Union Hotel which opens conveniently into "Nellie's Tap Room," formerly a billiard room for the young blades of Flemington, now the rendezvous of the world's reporters, famous and not so famous, met here in a fierce competition, wringing the last trace of circulation out of a name that dropped from the sky in 1927 and has been God's gift to newspapers ever since.

Circulation *has* improved. It jumped 50,000 for one New York newspaper the first week. But the reporter who told me that was not impressed. Circulation isn't advertising. It is doubtful whether the increase will cover the cost of the trial, which is enormous. "When it's all over," he said dejectedly, "we'll probably get a cut to pay for it." What the great spectacle is costing day by day is anybody's guess. When I tried to get some figures from Western Union on its investment I gathered that that great institution maintains a large staff of idealists but no bookkeepers. "We just don't look at it that way," came the gracious but firm reply, "with us, it's just a question of service."

Meanwhile the greatest array of newspaper talent ever assembled to report one murder trial pours upwards of 300,000 words a day on to the wires and into the world's papers. No wonder a harassed, hard-boiled man in the wire room exclaims in answer to a question: "Yesterday? My God, I can't remember what happened yesterday!" And no wonder that at the bottom of page one of almost any newspaper in any city there runs a note: Other news of the Lindbergh case on pages 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Only in Flemington is it difficult to get late news of the testimony. The town has one paper, a weekly. It is meeting the emergency by coming out twice a week.

Court readjourns at 1:45 for the afternoon session. I am sorry to report that the courtroom scene is not much like the movies. It looks more like an old-fashioned country meeting-house crowded with ordinary people. The one huge room reaches to the roof, with many tall windows. Today, with the fog pressing it, it is close and breathless despite its spacious look. The judge's bench and the witness chair stand outlined against the big windows at the far end. The bright red dress of a juror, who is making the most of her short-lived fame, stands out on the right. The famous trick performers of the press and radio have managed to get places almost under the judge's nose. The working press must be content with less favored seats. Everywhere messenger boys stand ready to dash copy to the wire room.

From the narrow balcony opposite the judge's bench, where part of the press sits, the faces of the two principals, Lindbergh and Hauptmann, are not visible—only the non-committal backs of two heads. As the judge walks to his place, the tension draws tight in the balcony. It never relaxes while he is in the room. Copy is written and sent to the wire room, notes are passed back and forth, reporters come and go, climbing over each other's backs along the narrow benches. It is very hot, almost feverish, in the narrow place as a dozen men turn testimony into news with the speed and efficiency of machines and shoot it out to catch the ninth edition, which will presently be lying in a gutter while the tenth edition has its brief moment of triumph. As usual the unsung, underpaid, conscientious gentlemen of the press are pouring into this journalistic circus a degree of energy and talent quite disproportionate to the ends they serve.

Dr. Condon walks jauntily to the witness chair. He believes in "doing good." He believes there is good in everybody. He believes in "psychology." He uses it now. He is a popular witness who plays up to the judge and the audience and enjoys it hugely. (The newspapermen don't like him much—perhaps they don't believe there is good in everybody.) He tells the story of his meeting with "John" in the cemetery, of the transfer of the ransom money. In tones of satisfaction he describes how he got the kidnappers to reduce the ransom from $70,000 to $50,000, and there is immense pride in his voice as he quotes "John's" words of praise at the end of the encounter: "You're perfect. The crowd thinks you're fine." Under the direction of Attorney General Wilentz we get a self-portrait of the Inveterate Reformer from the most beautiful borough in the world shaking hands with a man in a cemetery who had just taken $50,000 for a kidnapped child that was already dead. "Remember," said Jafsie, "don't double-cross me." And finally there comes the fantastic moment when Dr. Condon, recounting how the bad bandit had double-crossed him after all, said with an aggrieved air as his glance swept the room: "I felt hurt, naturally." No wonder the crowd likes Jafsie.

The coverage of the trial in pictures is a story in itself. Judge Trenchard at first refused to have pictures taken in his courtroom. But 700 newspapermen can't be wrong, and there are now four cameramen stationed in court who are allowed to take pictures when the judge is off the bench. These "inside" men take their plates to a photograph pool in a former bakery shop, where they are developed in an improvised dark room. Each newspaper or press service in the pool gets a full set of all successful pictures. These are put in envelopes and addressed and the race for the home office begins. Record-breaking motor cyclists stand ready in the one-time bake shop to make a dash for the train, the airport, or the city room. One of them made the trip to New York in fifty-five minutes last week. One of them delivered his set of pictures ahead of an airplane which had started at the same time. Tonight the train will have to do; the fog is too thick for planes and motor cycles. There are only four pictures in this set, with Jafsie holding the main place. A newsman shoves his batch into its envelope in disgust. "That's the last picture of Jafsie I'm going to send." It isn't. The hundred or so photographers outside do not pool their pictures. They hunt new stuff and guard it with their lives. Yesterday with the help of a cop and a camera man a girl spectator was hoisted to one of the courtroom windows, where she was pictured "trying to get in."

One question is constant. Who is paying for the Hauptmann defense? Rumors are thick of course and facts are thin: he is being supported by pro-Nazi organizations; he is being subsidized by a powerful newspaper; Mrs. Hauptmann is carrying the expense through her broadcasts and a newspaper "life" of her husband. No one suspects that Mr. Reilly and his associates are working for humanitarian reasons.

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Justice in the Virgin Islands

Washington, January 14

THE Virgin Islands may be a long way from Washington, but in one respect they are close to Nazi Germany—this in the administration of justice by District Judge T. Webber Wilson in a case which promises to become notorious in American jurisprudence. Incredible as it may appear to those accustomed to Anglo-American traditions, Judge Wilson acted in this case both as prosecutor and judge, and sentenced a government employee whom the government refused to prosecute. The case is that of The People versus Leonard Walter McIntosh. Judge Wilson, when the government attorney moved a nolle prosequi, overruled the motion, refused a jury trial, himself put the witnesses on the stand, questioned them, summed up their evidence, lectured the prisoner, and sentenced him. Thus stated in bald terms the facts are hardly credible. But this trial is the climax of a long and picturesque story which might be called "Storm Over the Virgin Islands." It deserves a novelist's canvas, which one can hope it will receive now that Robert Herrick has been appointed to the Islands as secretary to the administration. The material is too rich for detailed treatment here and can only be suggested.

The Virgin Islands, stepdaughter of the American colonial family, have appeared frequently in print during the Roosevelt Administration, principally because the President retained the services of the able, non-political governor, Paul Martin Pearson. Political insurrections have come to the boiling-point, with the steam rising to the newspapers. There was the rebellion of Paul C. Yates, administrative assistant to the governor, which ended in his own removal. Eli Baer, the government attorney, let it be known that the Islands were reeking with corruption, and brought 101 charges. This was followed by investigations by the Department of the Interior which ended with the dismissal of Baer and disclosed one actual case of petty thievery and no more, beyond a mass of innocent administrative irregularity natural in a far-away district, with a staff too small and untrained to handle a large public-works program. And there was this case against Leonard Walter McIntosh, chief clerk of the Public Works Department, accused of using $11 worth of government lumber and $27.40 worth of government cement in building his own house. McIntosh is an educated quadroon. He once borrowed some government cement which he returned. He did use the lumber and seven sacks of cement, total value of $16, in building his house. But for these he gave the government full value: he repaired the government radio set, supplying transformers and tubes, and he furnished the government with $5 worth of cartridge paper. The transactions were administratively incorrect, but they were crudely honest, and what is more they were approved at the time by his superior officer, Donald Stewart Boreham, Assistant Commissioner of Public Works.

A point to be noted is that if McIntosh could be convicted, it would do something to justify the broadside attacks on the Pearson administration and the Department of the Interior. A further point is that if Governor Pearson were removed he might be succeeded by none other than the ambitious judge in this case, T. Webber Wilson, a Democratic politician not under the Interior jurisdiction. And still another point is that if Wilson became governor there would be some twenty-five jobs to be distributed among "worthy" Democratic office-seekers. Judge Wilson, a former Democratic Congressman from Mississippi, was defeated for the Senate some years ago. A party man out of a job, he attained the bench in the Virgin Islands through the Department of Justice via Homer Cummings via Jim Farley via Pat Harrison. His effective qualification was that he "deserved" to be taken care of. At any rate it was not his mastery of the forms of American justice or his special fitness as a Mississippian to administer the law to a colored population. In the Virgin Islands he consorted with the little social clique which is chronically anti-administration, and on St. Croix, with its population of 14,000, most of it native, a tiny clique can be both vociferous and important. The administrative colony is a mere handful, and the defection of a judge and a government attorney can work havoc. Eli Baer and the Judge were the closest associates, lived in the same house. Baer worked up the charges of graft. The island population was in a flutter. But Baer himself was investigated and dismissed. His successor, George S. Robinson, arrived, and knowing the facts in the McIntosh case, saw no other course than to move to dismiss it. There, without the vivid tropical color of St. Croix, is the preliminary to this extraordinary trial.

Judge Wilson was not to be checkmated. He delayed the trial until Baer, despite his dismissal, returned to the Islands, for he was to be the star witness. McIntosh once gave a statement to Baer admitting that he received and used the lumber and some of the cement. The admission had been made late one night when McIntosh had gone to see Baer at the police station, frightened half out of his wits. Knowing that he was implicated, he had already had two "nervous breakdowns" that day (he testified), and he got through only part of his story to Baer before a third came upon him. He asked for a drink of water and begged to be allowed to finish the story next day, when he would explain everything. That explanation would have told of the irregular barter of the radio parts and the cartridge paper. But he never went back to Baer because the very next day Washington intervened and ordered the government attorney to desist from his star-chamber proceedings. So Baer had an admission without the explanation, and was going to produce it in court as a "confession," incomplete as it was and unsigned.

The trial began with the refusal of the new government attorney to prosecute; his motion to dismiss the case had been overruled a fortnight before. Judge Wilson thereupon established himself as that phenomenon in American justice, a prosecutor and judge in one. McIntosh's attorney asked for a jury trial. Judge Wilson refused. The Judge then put the witnesses on the stand and himself examined them. Thus he established that McIntosh had received the lumber and cement. Baer introduced the "confession." McIntosh naturally explained the barter transaction, and his

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superior officer stood by him, swearing that he had authorized and approved it. In conclusion the Judge did a spectacular bit of summing up, regaled the crowded courtroom with a definition of fraud, and closed with a passage of Mississippian rhetoric which must be reproduced verbatim to be believed. Addressing the prisoner he declared:

> You have become a Judas and Benedict Arnold to your country. There is a story from the Bible which I wish to recall to your mind, in the hope that it will be a great benefit to you and to others in the future. To err is but human, but when one does err and is brought to account he should remember the story of Christ on the cross. In the darkest hour ever experienced by mankind Jesus of Nazareth was delivered into the hands of the multitude to be crucified. Depraved mankind could not think of a more reprehensible death than to nail Jesus to a rustic cross with a thief on either side of him. One thief, so far as the record shows, never repented. The other looked up into the agonizing face of the Savior and repented, and Jesus uttered words that have echoed down the corridors of the centuries when he said: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." I would suggest that when you go home you get on your knees and appeal to the Christ even as the thief on the cross. And if you do that, then I feel sure you will live a life devoid of criticism, and will be given every chance to walk in a right way by well-thinking people in this community. . . . I want people in this community to give you every consideration and to give you every chance to start anew and to get back on the highway of life on which you once walked. I ask this for the sake of yourself and your family. I shall fine you $200.

Now $200 is a lot of money in the Virgin Islands, and McIntosh is a poor man. At first it looked as if he might have to serve out the fine in prison, but bail was found. His lawyers also filed an appeal, which will go before the District Court in Philadelphia if it can be financed. The case is under consideration by the American Civil Liberties Union, and deserves their active intervention. It must be assumed that Attorney General Cummings knows about the remarkable attributes developed by his appointee, but Wilson still retains his judgeship. The moral of the story need hardly be drawn. The case is a further stigma on the practice of making political appointments without regard to fitness or ability. On the whole, the non-political appointees in our colonies have done excellent work, and the sooner we can develop a trained colonial service in which ability alone qualifies for office the better. It will be strange if Judge Wilson, by throwing the lurid light of his own grotesque behavior on the situation, has not hastened a basic reform.

R. G. S.

Election in the Saar

By JACK FISCHER

Saarbrücken, January 15 (By Cable)

The 10 per cent Socialist and Communist minority in the Saar say they will not submit to Hitler rule but plan to continue their opposition underground. France expects 30,000 refugees. A huge export of capital has been going on during the last three days. The plebiscite was absolutely fair and peaceful despite extreme Nazi moral pressure. Ninety-seven per cent of the eligible voters balloted—the most complete expression of public opinion on record.—FISCHER.

Saarbrücken, January 2

SAARBRUCKEN, in these last days before the plebiscite, is in a jittery and apprehensive mood. Normally it is a quiet, soot-streaked little city, the capital of a territory not much larger than the average American county. Because its wooded hills cover a six-hundred-year supply of coal, this strip of land is one of the most densely populated —and most coveted—in Europe, and the whole population is overwhelmed by its responsibility for making history.

Today Saarbrücken's streets are crowded with the troops of the League's first international army—apple-cheeked English youngsters and dagger-toting Italians, most of them, with a sprinkling of Hollanders and tall Swedes. The French frontier, a few miles to the southwest, is stiff with soldiers. From the Saar hilltops at night you can see their arc-lights as they work on their great chain of forts running from Switzerland to the sea. What the Reichswehr may be doing behind the other boundary is something of a mystery, but every Saarlander is eager to retail the latest rumor. Many a sober citizen believes that before the month is out the Saar may be the first battleground in a new World War.

To an outsider this hysteria seems a trifle unnecessary, because nothing serious is at all likely to happen in the Saar. Every really explosive question stirred up by the plebiscite is already well on the way toward peaceful settlement. The result of the voting, in the first place, is a foregone conclusion. A German victory is so unmistakably certain that France stopped its propaganda long ago. And the last ominous possibility was forestalled by the arrival of the League's spruce little army. The excuse that international troops were needed "to preserve order during the plebiscite" was, of course, simply a tactful diplomatic pretext. The Saarlanders are docile folk, and the local police should have not the slightest difficulty in keeping them in order. The presence of British and Italian troops is the soundest guaranty that no putsch will be attempted by Nazi hotheads.

The only important question still at issue is the size of the dissenting vote. The Nazis have enrolled 93 per cent of the population in their German Front, but this figure means less than nothing. Thousands of members have been intimidated into joining, and not even the German leaders pretend that all of them will vote for the Reich. Few, indeed, will vote for France; but the Social Democrats claim —with pardonable optimism—that a good 35 per cent will declare themselves for the status quo.

Now the Saar population is almost solidly German. It includes only some 5,000 Jews and not many more Frenchmen—in all, less than 2 per cent of the total. Communism, likewise, has never claimed many converts even among the mine and iron-works laborers. A poll for the status quo of

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more than 5 per cent, therefore, can mean only one thing: a thumping vote of censure against Hitler *by loyal Germans.*

The Nazis, quite naturally, are doing their utmost to lighten this blow to their prestige as much as possible. Their campaign is being carried out with a thoroughness which has few parallels. No expense is grudged, no effort shirked. The Saar people have been organized, propagandized, spoon-fed, and high-pressured in every conceivable manner. Germany has bought up most of the established Saar newspapers and started many new ones, "coordinating" them so that they publish only "authorized information." Its powerful Stuttgart radio station just across the border floods the ether with nationalist propaganda and scurrilous attacks on the League Governing Commission eighteen hours a day. In America Hitler's envoys dug up 370 persons who were residents of the Saar in 1919, and hence are qualified to vote; they were brought back, passage free, and billeted until the plebiscite in the homes of loyal National Socialists. With them came 1,200 other qualified voters, rounded up from all the corners of Asia, South America, Africa, and Europe.

German favors to the Saar have been generous. Saar products are given a tariff preference. Saar citizens are invited to visit German cities, at a 75 per cent reduction in rail fare. Literally tens of thousands have been transported free to mass-meetings on German soil. Athletic teams have been subsidized; school children on holiday have been entertained for weeks in German homes. Until the Governing Commission put a stop to it, the Nazis even managed to enlist from 10,000 to 16,000 Saar youths in the German Volunteer Labor Corps. At a cost of more than $5,000,000, these youngsters were given trips all over the Reich, preferential treatment in the work camps, and "special instruction for the plebiscite campaign."

Against Saarlanders who are not susceptible to such bribery, the fascists have been able to bring almost irresistible social pressure. Persons who refuse to join the German Front have been shown the spot allegedly selected for the Saar's future concentration camp. A few, according to rumor, have even been kidnapped across the border and there imprisoned and beaten. An espionage system has been so thoroughly organized that for a time G. G. Knox, the harassed English chairman of the Governing Commission, could not trust his own police and personal servants. Social Democrat trade-unionists have the greatest difficulty in holding jobs. They are even hard pressed to find a place to meet, since no innkeeper dares rent his hall to "traitors." Nearly all the status quo demonstrations have been held either in the open or in the Saarbrücken municipal auditorium.

Few merchants are brave enough to advertise in *Volksstimme*, the principal Social Democratic newspaper, and still fewer distributors have nerve enough to sell it. You can still buy the paper at the railway-station kiosks, where it is kept under the counter and passed out with the name plate folded under. Nevertheless, *Volksstimme* manages to hold a good many readers—most of whom are content to read the pages pasted up each afternoon in the windows of the anti-Nazi bookshop.

Like many of his followers, Max Braun, the Social Democratic leader, has been personally boycotted. Because he can find no landlady willing to take the risk of sheltering him, he is forced to sleep in the Workers' Welfare House, owned and built by his party. Today he is hardly able to buy a meal in many of the Saarbrücken cafes. His mail is full of threatening letters, and once it contained a bomb which failed to explode. So far he has suffered no physical violence. The reason, he believes, is that Hitler has decreed that on no account must anything happen to Max Braun until after January 13. The Nazis want no more martyrs.

It is probably true, however, that open coercion has been held to a minimum. Knox has made heroic efforts to keep the campaigning as fair as possible. He has prohibited the formation of Storm Troop units, the wearing of political uniforms, and since December 23 the display of political flags. He can and frequently does suspend newspapers for printing particularly inflammatory articles. Since his recent reorganization of the police, either side can hold its meetings in complete safety. Street clashes have been remarkably few.

Knox's precautions are, of course, constantly decried by the German press as the most unconscionable kind of tyranny. Knox himself is the target for a barrage of hostile comment, and he has been virtually ostracized by Saarbrücken society. Almost no one has a good word to say for him; and yet no one denies that he has been an efficient and conscientious administrator. The only indictment is that he "protects traitors," that is, those persons who still doubt that Hitler is the new Messiah.

At the same time, however, the German Front seems to be making a sincere effort to help the commission preserve outward order. Realizing that an open reign of terror would hurt Germany most, the responsible leaders have done their best to keep a check-rein on their younger firebrands. They even send out polite apologies from time to time to persons who complain of insults or abuse from Nazi workers.

The Plebiscite Commission—which is, of course, quite distinct from the Governing Commission—reports that there is no evidence that either side has attempted to register illegal voters on a large scale. Because many Saarlanders live in one place and work in another, the registration originally showed a number of duplications, most of them quite innocent. By careful checking most of these have been eliminated, and the present list of 540,000 qualified voters is probably accurate. There is every reason to believe that the balloting itself will be scrupulously fair. The most sinister attempt to pervert the plebiscite was a Nazi campaign to persuade "every loyal German" to use an open ballot; those who refused would have been automatically branded as enemies of the Reich. This campaign has been spiked, however, and all possible precautions are being taken to guarantee that the polling shall be really secret.

If the transfer to Germany finally is made without any serious mishap, the League of Nations should harvest considerable prestige from its first experiment in international government. On the whole the League administration has been commendable, except during the early post-war years when the Governing Commission was dominated by the patriotic M. Victor Rault, who thought it his duty to act, not as an impartial ruler, but as an agent of the French republic. True enough, many Saarlanders still protest bitterly against being "ruled like a nigger tribe," and complain that the suggestions of their advisory parliament are usually ignored. Yet the Nazis themselves admit that under the last three commission chairmen—G. W. Stephens of Canada, Sir Ernest Wilton of England, and Knox—the territory has been governed cheaply and well. The Saar has incurred no debts, its

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budget is habitually balanced, and its taxes, compared with those of the bordering states, are low. Before the depression hit, the commission was even able to build up a surplus sufficient to permit a remission of taxes in 1929 and to carry a good part of the unemployment burden ever since. Relief and health service are admirable. And finally, in spite of the dictatorial form of government, freedom of speech and press have been greater than in almost any other Continental country. The very fact that 800,000 people are eager to trade such plain economic and political advantages for the doubtful glories of Nazi Germany is one of the most discouraging symptoms in Europe today.

The Menace of Huey Long

III. His Bid for National Power

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Baton Rouge, December, 1934

"HUEY LONG is the best stump speaker in America. He is the best political radio speaker, better even than President Roosevelt. Give him time on the air and let him have a week to campaign in each state, and he can sweep the country. He is one of the most persuasive men living." This is the opinion not of a Long supporter, but of one of the key men in the fight against the Kingfish in Louisiana. The North, he said, is misled into dismissing him as a clown, and has no conception of Huey's talents and of his almost invincible mass appeal. Mrs. Hattie Caraway of Arkansas can testify to his powers, for when she entered the primary asking to succeed her late husband in the United States Senate, she was generally expected to run last among five candidates and to poll not more than 2,000 votes. The four men against her were experienced and able. But Huey took his sound van into Arkansas for one week, and though he could not get into every county, he made a circular tour during which he spoke six times a day. Instead of 2,000 votes Mrs. Caraway won a majority over the combined opposition in the first primary, tantamount to election in a Democratic state. An analysis of the vote showed that the districts where Huey did not appear virtually ignored her, while those which he toured gave her a landslide.

When his hour strikes, Huey will attack the rest of America with the same vehemence. That probably will be during the campaign of 1936. His platform will be the capital levy, strangely enough his exclusive possession as a political theme. He will speak more violently than Father Coughlin against the money interests of Wall Street and against the evil of large fortunes. He will pose as a misunderstood man, and to most listeners he will give their first information of what he has accomplished in Louisiana. He will be direct, picturesque, and amusing, a relief after the attenuated vagueness of most of the national speaking today. He will promise a nest egg of $5,000 for every deserving family in America, this to be the minimum of poverty in his brave new world. He rashly will undertake to put all the employables to work in a few months. He will assail President Roosevelt with a passion which may at first offend listeners, but in the end he might stir up opposition of a bitterness the President has not tasted in his life. Obviously, he cannot succeed while the country still has hopes of the success of the New Deal and trusts the President. Huey's chances depend on those sands of hope and trust running out. He is no menace if the President produces reform and recovery. But if in two years, even six, misery and fear are not abated in America, the field is free to the same kind of promise-mongers who swept away Democratic leaders in Italy and Germany. Huey believes Roosevelt can be beaten as early as 1936, but he is prepared to agitate for another four years. In 1940 he will still be a young man of forty-six.

Over the radio, if he follows the technique he uses at home, Huey will begin something like this: "Hello, friends, this is Huey Long speaking. And I have some very important revelations to make. But before I begin, I want you to do me a favor. I am going to talk along without saying anything special for four or five minutes, just to keep things going. While I'm doing that I want you to go to the telephone and call up five of your friends, and tell them Huey Long is on the air, and has some very important revelations to make." Thus he builds up an audience. He then can hold it for an hour or even two, weaving a speech of argument and anecdote and special pleading which is entertaining and informative, and quietly eats away any latent prejudice of his listeners. The country will make his acquaintance over the air before it does on the stump. Louisiana State University is to have a new radio station of fifty-kilowatt power, strong enough to reach all but distant states. L. S. U. is Huey's university, and this will be his station. It is a basic factor in his national plan. (Since this was written he has given the first of two talks over a National Broadcasting Company network, introduced as described above and including a strong attack on the President.)

He does not expect the support of the press. But the "lyin' newspapers" in a contradictory sort of way are an asset. Upton Sinclair knows how it arouses instant sympathy to say you are the victim of a conspiracy of misrepresentation. And most newspaper publishers, despite their pretense of representing American opinion, do not guess how little the majority of their readers rely on them for disinterested service. Like Sinclair, Huey publishes his own newspaper, but in Louisiana he depends still more on a remarkable system of circulars. His card catalogue of local addresses is the most complete of any political machine in the world. It holds the name of every Long man in every community in the state, and tells just how many circulars this man will undertake personally to distribute to neighbors. Huey's secretary maintains a pretentious multigraph office, and it can run off the circulars and address envelopes to each worker in a single evening. Huey then mobilizes all the motor vehicles of the state highway department and

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the highway police. The circulars can leave New Orleans at night and be in virtually every household in the state by morning.

One may say that remarkable as that may be, it will work only in Louisiana and cannot be done throughout the United States. But in a way it can. By November the "Share Our Wealth" campaign had recruited 3,687,641 members throughout the country in eight months. (The population of Louisiana is only 2,000,000.) Every member belongs to a society, and Huey has the addresses of those who organized it. To them can go circulars enough for all members. The "Share Our Wealth" organization is first of all a glorified mailing list, already one of the largest in the land, but certain to grow much larger once the Long campaign gets under way. It is the nucleus of a nation-wide political machine. And though the movement is naively simple, its very simplicity is one secret of its success. Anyone can form a society. Its members pay no dues. They send an address to Huey and he supplies them with his literature, including a copy of his autobiography. He urges societies to meet and discuss the redistribution of wealth and the rest of his platform. He promises to furnish answers and arguments needed to silence critics.

The movement, however, is more than a mailing list, and since its doctrine is the basis of Huey's national appeal, it warrants close examination. This is set forth in a pamphlet entitled "Share Our Wealth," compiled by "Huey P. Long, United States Senator, Washington, D. C." On the cover is the quotation from St. John, Chapter 8, verse 32: "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Under the title is the subtitle: "Every Man a King"—part of a phrase of William Jennings Bryan's, "Every man a king but no one wears a crown." This is followed by a six-line quotation from Goldsmith, and under this: "Containing authorities, laws, statistics, and published comments of Leaders of all times." On page 1 is the following statement of principles and platform:

> 1. To limit poverty by providing that every deserving family shall share in the wealth of America for not less than one-third of the average wealth, thereby to possess not less than $5,000 free of debt.
>
> 2. To limit fortunes to such few million dollars as will allow the balance of the American people to share in the wealth and profits of the land.
>
> 3. Old-age pensions of $30 per month to persons over sixty years of age who do not earn as much as $1,000 per year or who possess less than $10,000 in cash or property, thereby to remove from the field of labor in times of unemployment those who have contributed their share to the public service.
>
> 4. To limit the hours of work to such an extent as to prevent overproduction and to give the workers of America some share in the recreations, conveniences, and luxuries of life.
>
> 5. To balance agricultural production with what can be sold and consumed according to the laws of God, which have never failed.
>
> 6. To care for the veterans of our wars.
>
> 7. Taxation to run the government to be supported, first, by reducing big fortunes from the top, thereby to improve the country and provide employment in public works whenever agricultural surplus is such as to render unnecessary, in whole or in part, any particular crop.

In black-face type follows the text: "Go ye into all communities and preach the Gospel to every living creature."

The pamphlet is so replete with Huey's Scriptural references that it is no surprise to find that a clergyman, the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith, is chief organizer of the movement. He is a kindly, eloquent, and sincere Long enthusiast, who left the wealthiest church in Shreveport to pursue this work. I doubt if he knows much about economics, for if he did he could not address huge meetings with such alluring promises and so much faith that he adds members by the tens of thousands. The power of promises among credulous people is not confined to Germany. There is a strawberry-grower near New Orleans who usually borrows enough money from the bank each year to finance his crop. This year the bank solicited the business, but the man said he wouldn't need the money as he was going to have more than enough from the $5,000 that Huey Long was giving him. Nor could the bank convince him that he was mistaken. He refused the loan. America may not be a nation of Louisiana strawberry-growers, but gullibility is not local to the lower Mississippi valley. Others will believe Huey's figures, and if he says the wealth of America is enough to give every family $15,000, they will not wonder that he is ready to guarantee each family a modest one-third of this figure.

I doubt whether Huey and the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith realize that property as such cannot be redistributed. How, for instance, divide a factory or a railroad among families? Value lies in use, and if the scheme were to be realized, all property would have to be nationalized, and the income from use distributed. The income from $5,000 would not be much for each family, not more than $200 or $300, certainly not enough to make true the dream of a home free of debt, a motor car, an electric refrigerator, and a college education for all the children, which is Huey's way of picturing his millennium. And if property is to be nationalized, why not share it equally? Why give the poor only a third, and decree the scramble for the other two-thirds in the name of capitalism? If Huey were to ask himself this question, he probably would answer that since both he and America believe in capitalism, he must advocate it. But probably he has not thought the platform through. He conceived of it early one morning, summoned his secretary, and had the organization worked out before noon of the same day. It isn't meant to be specific. It is only to convey to the unhappy people that he believes in a new social order in which the minimum of poverty is drastically raised, the rich somehow to foot the bill through a capital levy. It may be as simple as a box of kindergarten blocks, but could he win mass votes, or organize nearly four million people in eight months, by distributing a primer of economics?

I doubt, too, whether Huey has studied the dictatorships of Europe, though he can hardly help thinking of himself as a coming Hitler or Mussolini of America, since the parallel between him and his European prototypes is obvious. However, it must not be drawn too closely. Huey, for instance, is not a national socialist, if that title equips him at once with a philosophy of the state as the single dominant expression of the individual. He is a vulgar American politician, who has learned to play the two-fisted, sordid game of vote-getting and patronage infinitely better than his opponents. At his worst, he is no more unprincipled than they, his sin being that he is more ruthless and successful. At his best, he is not a social thinker, certainly not as much as

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either Hitler or Mussolini. Hitler's "Mein Kampf" is the work of an ascetic crusader. Mussolini's autobiography palpitates with ideas. Huey's autobiography is a scratchy, smug little tale of his political victories, tossed off in two weeks. Even so, Huey is an improvement on Hitler in two respects worthy of mention. He is free of the virus of racial prejudice and he is not anti-intellectual. That is not to say that he does not have the proverbial Southerner's disdain of the colored man, but it is not the basis of his political creed. Indeed, he prides himself on having improved Negro education in Louisiana, and on the exemption of virtually all Negroes in the state from taxation. Nor will Huey Long ever burn the books of his contemporaries in a public bonfire. Like many a man deprived of an academic education, he has an almost touching faith in it, and certainly cheaper and better schooling has been one of his central objectives. However impetuously he stamped out criticism of himself in the student newspaper of L. S. U., he has seen to it that good professors have been employed by the state, and they enjoy academic freedom. The incident of the *Reveille* is to be explained not by a philosophic hostility to free speech, but by the fact that the student who wrote the critical letter was a nephew of one of his bitterest opponents. He exploded because he thought his enemies were using "his" university against him and were getting away with it. It showed well enough how little he cares about the rights of criticism, but he does not mount the platform telling people, as Hitler and Mussolini do, that individuals must be prepared to sacrifice such personal rights for the good of the community.

It would clinch the larger parallel between Huey and Hitler if it could be demonstrated that Huey, like the dictator of Germany, understands how to win the financial support of big interests. Ostensibly he is their implacable foe, and his record shows much to justify his claim. But if he knows how to strike he may know also how to withhold his blows. Julius Long, Huey's brother (at the time estranged from him), testified before the Senate committee under oath that Huey's first unsuccessful candidacy for the governorship in 1924 was financed principally by the Southwestern Gas and Electric Company and allied interests. He also alleged that money had passed to his brother from representatives of the Union Indemnity Company. "They handed my brother," he testified, "a large roll of money, I think a couple of times, while I was there, which he tucked into one of the back pockets of his trousers. It looked like it would almost pull them off; at the same time he sort of seemed to be talking to himself that the Union Indemnity Company would get all the insurance of this state." This brother also threw doubt on Huey's sincerity in attacking big interests. "He does not care whether the trust is in, just so he is in. The trust could not have a better agent than Huey Long." This opinion is frequently expressed in New Orleans by those who have watched him in action. Nor would inconsistency, if it exists, be a change from the political tradition of Louisiana. Where there is only one party, and political power swings from one faction to another, fundamental principles often are obscured or even absent, and the focus of the fight is victory, and the fruit of victory is the spoils. Certainly this description of Huey Long's political conquests is just as true as to say that he has fought for the good of the people. There is room in Huey's scheme of things for inconsistency. Power must precede reform, and the end justifies the means. Even the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith himself said so.

The assumption in the North that Huey Long is a local phenomenon, a product of conditions not to be duplicated elsewhere, rests on the fallacy that the social picture of Louisiana is unique. The same easy-going mistake is made about those foreign countries, Germany and Italy. One has only to translate conditions in any of these regions into abstractions to see how little external distinctions really matter. Given a land in which the great majority are in want or in fear of it, in which democracy has not produced wise leadership or competent organs to conduct public affairs, in which "big interests" have far more than their share of power, the easiest sacrifice that society seems ready to make, if only its prejudices can be stirred, is of its democratic freedom. In Louisiana the dictatorship already is absolute; Huey controls all three functions of government, executive, legislative, and judicial. Is it resented? Certainly, by some people, just as Hitler and Mussolini are resented by some people in Germany and Italy. But not by all the people one might expect. This was brought home to me here, in a conversation with a young instructor at Louisiana State University. "I am troubled, too," he admitted. "There are many things Huey does that I don't approve of. But on the whole he has done a great deal of good. And if I had to choose between him without democracy and getting back the old crowd, without the good he has done, I should choose Huey. After all, democracy isn't any good if it doesn't work. Do you really think freedom is so important?"

This was not a German talking to me about Hitler, or an Italian about Mussolini. The argument was the same, the perplexity the same, the conclusion the same. I have heard scores of such confessions from equally intelligent Germans and Italians. The only new fact was the geography of the conversation. I was walking across the campus of an American university. And here it was I came face to face with the full menace of Huey Long. I repeat, he is no menace if Roosevelt succeeds, if he brings security to the lives of those who constitute the great majority of our people, if he redistributes wealth and democratizes economic power, if he establishes honest and efficient government. But if he fails, the man is waiting who is ruthless, ambitious, and indeed plausible enough to Hitlerize America.

[*The last of three articles on Huey Long. Next week Mr. Swing writes on Bilbo the Rabble Raiser.*]

A Merger for Music

By B. H. HAGGIN

OPERA at the Metropolitan, it has long been recognized, is an appendage of wealth, power, society. This was made clear a few years ago when there were proposals for a new opera house that would permit the long-suffering humble folk in the balconies to see. The boxholders—who under one name constitute the producing company and under another name the real-estate company that owns the opera house—refused, since the present opera house, which permitted them not only to see but to be seen, was completely satisfactory to them. The opera was theirs and for them; only their comfort, their social purposes were

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to be considered; and the rest of the public, which was present by their sufferance, could demand nothing.

At first there appears to be an analogy with opera in Europe, which was theoretically for the monarch—part of the pomp and pageantry connected with his position, and in this case the official, external expression of his supposed cultural enlightenment and taste. The shape of the opera house conformed to this fact: it was designed to let him see and be seen. And the public was there by his sufferance, his graciousness. But there was an important difference. Since the opera, in theory, was his and for him, he supported it out of his personal income. He had to do this because the public was really admitted to the performances by his generosity—that is, it paid very little for seats. The theory, then, was as usual a fiction; in effect the opera was for the public—which was why the republic continued to support it when the monarch was deposed. But our millionaires who pose as royalty want the privileges of royalty without its responsibilities. They charged the public high enough prices to make the opera pay for itself; and recently, when there was a deficit, they had the cheek to call on the public to save "its" opera.

With all their cheek, however, they could not very well ask the public to assume the annual loss on the opera house. So they attempted to use the method which they are accustomed to use in such situations in business. Some of the Metropolitan directors were also on the board of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society, which paid rent to Carnegie Hall for its concerts; and they attempted to get rid of their loss by securing the concerts for the opera house. They attempted to do this by a merger which also would have secured the Philharmonic-Symphony's money—its endowment fund, and the guaranty fund contributed last year by the public to insure the continuance of the concerts during the next three years—for the Metropolitan producing company.

The significant thing is that these men were willing to sacrifice the interests of the Philharmonic-Symphony, which were intrusted to their care, and to impoverish the musical life of New York in order to accomplish their purpose. For the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra had nothing to gain financially from the merger; and artistically it had a great deal to lose. A point was made of the advantage of having a first-class orchestra for the opera; but the double burden would have caused a deterioration in the orchestra's playing in both opera and concerts, and the quality of the concerts would have suffered in addition from the unfavorable acoustics of the opera house. Protest had its effect; the agreement, which was upset by the objection of Toscanini, provided for separate periods of opera and concerts, and restricted the use of the public's guaranty fund to the concerts. Nothing, however, was said about the use of the Philharmonic-Symphony's own endowment fund; and the concerts were still to be given at the opera house, which meant that Carnegie Hall would be torn down, and therefore that the city would be deprived of the visits of the Philadelphia and Boston Symphony orchestras.

The merger has fallen through this time, but sooner or later we shall have to accept the consequences of having artistic enterprises dependent on business men and financiers, who inevitably apply to them the criteria and methods which they are accustomed to apply to business and finance.

In the Driftway

WRITING in the Drifter's favorite magazine, the *Countryman*, St. John Ervine, who is always provocative even when he is being silly, sets forth his reasons for liking to live in the country. After first describing the city as noisy, dirty, unaired, and full of people, Mr. Ervine, in an eloquent peroration, sums up his rural passions thus:

> I like the country because, except when townspeople are about, it contains no clutter; because one can have solitude in it; because one can live near to growing things and enjoy the blessings of fresh fruit and fresh vegetables and not be dependent on stale stuff and things out of tins; because one can have a sense of community; because one can still live like a human being and not like an overworked machine; and finally because, as I said at the start, I like living in the country.

* * * * * *

OF these several reasons for preferring rural to urban life, the Drifter believes only the last to have any validity whatever. Of the first point, it is clear that the country clutter is merely different in kind from that of the city. Unless, for example, English farmers differ markedly from those in the United States—and there is small reason to suppose they do—there is in every field a residuum of broken plowshares, rake teeth, scythe handles, and rusted blades; every farmhouse is accompanied—sometimes even surrounded—by piles of varying sizes and degrees of offensiveness, depending on the neatness of the housewife and her ability to persuade her menfolk to clean up, in which old rubber boots, broken bottles, tin cans, bits of harness, bent bolts, and fragments of china mingle in desolate fraternity. Hardly a road that does not boast its ancient, twisted motor car; hardly a secret wooded place which is not in some corner or other somebody's dump heap also, the last resting-place of discarded stoves and water pails with holes in them. Clutter is clutter, and country people create it, being human beings, just as do their cousins who live in town.

* * * * * *

MR. ERVINE'S next point is the popular notion that only in the country can solitude be found. Now apart from the fact that in a small community every neighbor knows the private doings of every other neighbor—and if he doesn't, he takes considerable pains to discover them—it is well known that the most bitter, the most heart-crushing solitude is that found in the center of a great crowd of human beings, all strangers. To the unfamiliar in New York City, Times Square at theater time must be the loneliest, most solitary place in the world. The subway during the rush hour is packed with solitude—is packed, that is, with acres of human beings each bent on his own concerns and resenting furiously the intrusion of anyone else, however accidental. Push your subway neighbor's paper awry, step on his toe, urge yourself past him, however apologetically, and he will glare at you for the simple reason that you are alone and he is alone and he wishes matters to remain that

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way. And for the most part they do. Country solitude, when it is not being interrupted by friendly calls or the insistent ringing of the party line, is broken by birds whistling, or calves bawling, or branches creaking in the wind, or the distracting downfall of water on a brook bed. Not at all displeasing sounds, any of them, but not conducive to solitude.

* * * * * *

MR. ERVINE'S other points may be briefly dismissed. Obviously, the city is the place for fresh fruits and vegetables; obviously, except for the comparatively short summer season, it is in the country that things are eaten out of tins, or—at best—out of glass jars filled in the warm weather by the country wife. Obviously, the only countrymen who do not live like overworked machines—that is, who do not rise with the sun and work till it sets—are those effete ex-city folk who, like Mr. Ervine, are slaves to only one machine, the typewriter, and otherwise regulate their own hours. No, there is only one good reason for wanting to live in the country, and Mr. Ervine has expressed it in his last six words. The Drifter heartily agrees with him, but a number of years ago he stopped trying to rationalize his prejudice.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Were the Russian Executions Justified?

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Oswald Garrison Villard in a recent issue of *The Nation* takes a flat-footed stand that no end, however noble and desirable, would in his eyes justify such means as violence and the sacrifice of human life. But certainly no nation, no community in the past or present, has ever adopted this attitude. Of course Mr. Villard does not condone the shooting of spies and traitors, the killing of strikers, the execution of those who are caught plotting against existing governments.

But did not the Revolutionary Fathers know that the taking up of arms against England would result in the death of thousands of patriots as well as redcoats? Did not Lincoln know that thwarting the desire of the South for separation from the Union would mean the death of tens of thousands of Americans? Is not the path of human progress paved with the blood of willing and unwilling martyrs? Look at the human cost of the progress of aviation, of the motor car. Would Mr. Villard halt such progress?

The statistician can foretell with almost scientific accuracy the toll of human life that will be the cost of every bridge, every tunnel, every subway to be built in the future. Fifty thousand innocent lives could be saved yearly if every automobile were taken off our streets and replaced by the horse and buggy. Would Mr. Villard, in his concern for the sanctity of human life, consent to that? And would he forbid the building of bridges and subways and dams because of the lives that will be inevitably lost?

New York, December 28 M. SHAINE

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

At last Mr. Villard has come to his senses by raising his voice with a bitter cry (*The Nation* of December 26) against the Russian despots for their latest butchery of their political dissenters. The true libertarians raised their voices many years ago, and among them were Bertrand Russell, Emma Goldman, and Alexander Berkman. Their protest did not differ in principle from Mr. Villard's; and yet it required sixteen years for Mr. Villard to be convinced of the fundamental truth that a dictatorship by whatever name it may be called can be nothing else but despotic and cruel. From now on Mr. Villard will be placed in the column of the libertarians.

Stelton, N. J., December 29 A. SCHNEIDER

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The article by Mr. Villard on the executions in the Soviet Union reveals the following points:

1. That Mr. Villard obtained all his information from the anti-Soviet press.

2. That the press reports tried to make it appear that large numbers of men, women, and children were seized and shot without valid cause and without trial.

3. That it is the intent of the capitalist-owned press to spread lies and distortions of truth about the Soviet Union.

4. That Mr. Villard entirely forgot that a government which aims at a new social order must deal severely with those who are ready to destroy the building of that order. And that "speedy justice," which American newspapers demand for criminals here, is a fact in the Soviet Union. That does not make justice less just, for these conspirators were tried and found guilty. Many of them confessed and named others.

However, many tears will be shed over these enemies of the new social order, as Mr. Villard has also shed tears over the exiled kulaks—the petty Insulls and grafters who thought more of their own selfish gain than of the well-being of the mass of the Russian people.

Boston, December 30 HERBERT S. HYSON

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am a new reader of *The Nation*—indeed, a very recent convert to radical tendencies—and I hesitate very much to take issue with Mr. Villard, for whom I have the greatest respect; but his article on page 729 on the Russian executions doesn't seem to jibe very well with the Spanish piece on page 727.

Terrorist methods apparently do get results! If the Paris Commune had used them more generously in 1870, if the German Socialists had tried them with more rigor at the end of the war, if the Italian radical leaders had shed a bit more blood, if the Austrian Socialists had killed a bit more indiscriminately, isn't it at least perfectly reasonable to suppose that they might be better off, and that the cause of the working classes might also be better off in those countries?

It must be acknowledged in general that there is more ability, more leadership, more executive ability among the wealthy classes in capitalistic countries than among the Bolsheviks. Granted this, and the fact that the Bolsheviks realize how few of them were engaged in bringing about their revolution, without outside help that amounted to anything, is it strange that they feel that as long as the rest of the world is capitalistic, they cannot afford to take the slightest chance with domestic discord? Discredit their methods as much as you will—and no one would deplore them more than myself—still, looking at the facts of the case from a disinterested point of view, you must admit that they at least are running their country more in the interests of the working class than any other country is being run. Russia is still the only country in which a revolution has been made to stick.

I agree with Mr. Villard's statement that the recent Russian events merely prove the instability of the Russian regime. That is true. But I also imagine that as long as Russia is the only socialist state in the world, its leaders, if they stay realistic, will continue to consider it unstable.

Chicago, December 30 C. R.

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Fortune and the Honor Roll

To the Editors of The Nation:

The editors of *Fortune* magazine wish to express to you their deep appreciation of your mention of *Fortune's* disarmament article in your Honor Roll for 1934. We are proud indeed to have your approval so publicly expressed.

In communicating our gratitude to you, I should like to make one personal correction which perhaps you can find means to effect. In the newspaper accounts of your awards my name has been associated with the preparation of the article. Actually, *Fortune* articles are the result of the combined work of several members of the staff, and in this particular case the editor in charge was Associate Editor Eric Hodgins, to whom all personal credit should go. That the publication of the article had my fullest and most enthusiastic approval goes, I hope, without saying, but though I should very much like to claim the credit which the newspapers have given me, I cannot do so.

You would relieve me of an embarrassment which I very keenly feel if you could either make public this letter or in some other suitable way transfer your specific personal approval to the man who deserves it.

New York, December 28 Archibald MacLeish

[Mr. MacLeish's name was inadvertently included in press releases sent out before *The Nation* went to press. It was not on the Honor Roll as printed in *The Nation*. We are grateful for his letter and glad to print the necessary correction.—Editors The Nation.]

A Correspondence on Liberty

The Nation *reproduces the following five letters between Mr. Krutch and representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union as an interesting, if casual, commentary on a problem of immediate importance in a period of social unrest.*

Joseph Wood Krutch to Elmer Rice

Dear Rice:

I am inclosing a check and membership card to the American Civil Liberties Union. I must say frankly, however, that I would be happier if I were convinced that the majority of members really believed in civil liberties as such. I wonder if Roger Baldwin does?

New York, December 31 Joseph Wood Krutch

Roger Baldwin to Mr. Krutch

Dear Mr. Krutch:

Elmer Rice has sent me your letter of December 13 with a copy of his reply. I see that you raise some question as to whether I really believe in civil liberties "as such." I think the best practical answer to that is that I do believe in applying without discrimination the right to carry on any propaganda whatever without interference, regardless of the political or economic philosophy involved. On that point I am in entire agreement with my fellow-members of the Civil Liberties Union, who represent, however, quite diverse elements from the point of view of their politics and economics.

On the economic front my views are left. I can support for that reason the Soviet dictatorship, which tolerates no civil liberties. I do so because, though I oppose dictatorship in principle, the Soviet Union has already achieved economic liberties far greater than exist elsewhere in the world. In the long run the only ground on which liberty can be securely based is economic. The "workers' democracy," despite the limitations of dictatorship, is the nearest approach to freedom that workers have ever achieved—and they constitute all but a small minority.

New York, December 19 Roger Baldwin

Mr. Krutch Replies

Dear Mr. Baldwin:

Thanks for your letter. I know that the American Civil Liberties Union has more important things to do than to carry on a controversy like this, but I am going to answer your letter anyway. My original question was prompted by the book you wrote a year or two ago about Russia. I am well aware that the union makes a practice of defending the civil liberties of all sorts of people, but I assume that this is merely because you believe that in a democracy it is only by such tactics that you can effectively fight for the civil liberties of the particular kinds of persons you are interested in. It does seem to me, however, that it all comes down to this: I believe in civil liberties as long as my side is in the minority and can enjoy liberty only by granting it to others, but of course if my minority should become the majority it would promptly deny to others the liberty which it now claims for itself.

I feel that free criticism is the only thing which could possibly prevent any dictatorship or bureaucracy from becoming completely corrupt. The article you inclose says that when the power of the working class has been achieved, you are for "maintaining it by any means whatsoever." The only way it can maintain itself is by securing the right of criticism.

New York, December 31 Joseph Wood Krutch

From Mr. Baldwin

Dear Mr. Krutch:

I have to add a postscript to our correspondence in the light of yours of the thirty-first, to say that I entirely agree that the right of criticism is indispensable to the successful conduct of any government. In the Soviet Union they have sought to achieve that by what they call self-criticism in the Communist Party—a quite limited right I agree—and the development of the so-called workers-and-peasants correspondents all over the Soviet Union, who are encouraged to register complaints and kicks with the authorities.

I know this does not take the place of a political opposition, but I concur in the view that this is quite impracticable in a period such as that through which Soviet Russia is going. For a political opposition would strike at the very framework of a socialist state. I say all this, deploring, as I know you do, the terrorism and highly concentrated political power of the present regime in Russia. I can tolerate it only as preferable to the concentrations of power in capitalist countries.

New York, January 2 Roger Baldwin

From Mr. Krutch

Dear Mr. Baldwin:

You say that political opposition is "quite impracticable" in Russia today. Now I am constantly being assured by Communists that while capitalism is obviously collapsing, communism is inevitable. If this is true, then is it not obvious that a communist state is in a better position than a capitalist one to permit opposition?

New York, January 9 Joseph Wood Krutch

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Labor and Industry

How Radical Are the Farmers?

By JAMES RORTY

Pierre, South Dakota

DURING the month of November I traveled some two thousand miles by automobile through the agricultural regions of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota. I talked to scores of farmers, as well as to educators, agricultural economists, journalists, farmer-business men connected with the producers' and consumers' cooperatives, and miscellaneous citizens. In addition I attended two conventions of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union—the Wisconsin State convention at Wausau and the national convention at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

When, in an effort to ingratiate myself with the farm leaders I encountered at the state and national conventions, I explained that I owned a few acres in southern Connecticut on which I grew a few cabbages, they shrugged and changed the subject. They were right. I am no farmer. In fact, I have always thought farmers a pretty stupid lot. When I intimated as much, they suddenly became interested. They agreed with me. They could prove it. They did prove it in closely documented speeches to their assembled "brothers and sisters"—this being the prevailing form of address. And this is how they talked to their brothers and sisters at the state convention at Wausau, Wisconsin:

"You are a class, a class of slaves, a voiceless herd of cattle. For years you have understood that you were the slaves of society. Why else have you educated John or Mary to be a doctor, a teacher, a business man—anything but a farmer? You have sent the best minds, the best spirits to the city, and have left the worst on the farm to become the future peons of America. What makes you think you have anything in common with these bankers, business men, Rotarians? They are a class; they know it, and organize as a class. Well, it's time you did the same thing. You've got to take out a card in a militant farm union."

It sounds like the anarchist Galleani in his best rabble-rousing manner. But the speaker is Charles Talbott, president of the North Dakota Farmers' Union. He owns a big ranch near Jamestown, North Dakota. He is no peon. In Russia they would call him a kulak, or even a landed proprietor. And at the national convention at Sioux Falls a week later he was standing with the right wing of the convention, which wanted to placate the secedent Nebraska union by yielding to their demand that Edward E. Kennedy, the national secretary, be replaced. The right wing lost when the candidacy of Cal Ward, Kansas president, for the national vice-presidency was ruled out on the ground that a farmer-union man who got more of his income from the government than he did from the union was not eligible to hold a national office. (Ward had been paid $15 a day by the AAA in connection with the corn-hog acreage-reduction program.) In the convention fight the expletives "pay-roller" and "bird-dog" were freely used in the lobbies and even on the floor. But Fritz Shulheis, retiring National Board member, who was active in the fight against the right-wingers, himself holds the position of Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture in Wisconsin, having been put in the position more or less at the demand of the Wisconsin Farmers' Union. And both left-wing and right-wing spokesmen were equally eloquent in denouncing the scarcity-promotion program of Secretary Wallace and in demanding "cost of production," government refinancing of farm loans, and agricultural embargoes. I was obliged to conclude, therefore, that farmers' conventions, like labor conventions, are highly political, that the strife of leaders is intense; that as between right, center, and left only a highly sophisticated reporter—not the present writer—could be quite sure which was which.

Surely, one would suppose, Milo Reno represents the left of the farmers' movement. It was he who put Cal Ward on the spot in the national convention, and no one denounced more loudly the program of the Triple A. Well, I pursued Brother Reno to his hotel, scratched him, and found the fundamentalist underneath. Cost of production, remonetization of silver, embargoes on agricultural products—he was emphatically for the Farmers' Union line. But would not this line lead ultimately to the nationalization of the land as the only permanent solution? No. That would be communism and he was against communism.

"I'm a believer in the Bible," said Milo Reno. That gave me rather a jolt. Wilbur Glenn Voliva had said the same thing when I interviewed him in Zion City a month before. Wilbur also believes, or pretends to believe, that the earth is flat. Wilbur also believes in some kind of ecclesiastical cooperative commonwealth, although the cooperatively produced peanut brittle I bought in the Zion restaurant was not good. Wilbur wears a prehistoric boiled shirt with foot-long cuffs that stick out at you like cannon when you sit opposite him. I had to go through two secretaries and three deacons before I was privileged to interview the prophet. The top of his square head was dusty, like the white-maned head of Bryan in his last, fundamentalist period. He reads the papers. He says he gets his prophecies of doom out of the Bible but I think he gets them out of the papers. The little boys in Zion City speak slightingly of the prophet. They refer to his tabernacle as the "White Dove Movie Palace." I think the prophet knew that I knew that he didn't believe in his prophecies, or care much. A seedy, dusty, dated showman, but useful by way of reminding us that fundamentalism still lives and must be watched out for. Reno is not like that. His political principles are disorganized, unintelligent, unformulated, but he has been a fighter, a leader ahead of his crowd, and in some respects he still is. But he remains a Middle Western fundamentalist.

It may be, of course, that the Holiday Association is to the left of its national president. Of all the farmers' meetings I attended, the most impressive was a conference of delegates from the drought-stricken counties of western Minnesota, organized by John Bosch, president of the Minnesota Holiday Association, to petition Governor Olson for more

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help than the FERA and AAA were giving them. For the better part of a day they matched facts and arguments with the state relief administrator and came out better than even. Not, however, with more stock feed, which was what they wanted. There was no money for that. They warned that the farmers had only two or three days' feed ahead for their stock; that if the snow came and covered what was left of the meager forage, the farmers would probably take by force what little grain and roughage there was stored in the region. (They did precisely that at Appleton, Minnesota, a few days later.) And by way of summing up, one exasperated farmer shouted: "Why doesn't the government treat this drought as a calamity instead of as a plaything?"

This man, you would say, must have been a thoroughly class-conscious farmer. I visited him later at his farm near Montevideo. House, barns, and land were well kept. Here again was no peon. He told me that he had been a dealer in land in Iowa and had lost out in the "landslide" a few years ago. He had salvaged enough to make a good payment on 200 acres of Minnesota land and had done reasonably well until the dry years came. As business man and farmer, alternately and both together, he was more or less typical of the membership not merely of the Farmers' Union but of the Holiday Association. That is one reason why it is hard to make the phrase "class consciousness" mean anything as applied to farmers. Farmers are in business. Farmers are also traders and capitalists—oppressed and dispossessed capitalists, if you like, but still pretty much dominated by the individualist business man's psychology.

Why, for example, doesn't the Holiday Association, most of whose members also belong to the Farmers' Union, merge with the latter organization? Because the Holiday Association is not in business, owns no property, and is consequently foot-loose, whereas the Farmers' Union is tied to a complex structure of producers' and consumers' cooperatives, most of which center in St. Paul. The members of the Holiday Association describe themselves cheerfully as the "scrubwomen" for the Farmers' Union. It is they who stop evictions and stage milk strikes. And it is they, significantly, who join forces with organized labor, as recently when the Minnesota Holiday Association fed the striking truck drivers of Minneapolis. As for the Farmers' Union, as late as the convention of 1924 it came close to passing a resolution deploring the use of the strike as a weapon in labor disputes. It has traveled leftward since then, but not as far as one might suppose.

The farmers are in business. The Sioux Falls convention passed a resolution introduced by the delegate from California, K. V. Garrod, who is incidentally a member of the California State Board of Agriculture, opposing "unreasonable rules applied by the Food and Drug Administration for the protection of the consumer." The trouble was about prune juice, a designation for the new product of the California Prune Growers' Association which the Food and Drug Administration objected to. More importantly, the Minnesota union split two years ago because the "educational"—that is to say, political-organizational-legislative—part of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union couldn't get along with the cooperative part, which means the Farmers' Union Central Exchange, Live Stock Commission, and Grain Corporation.

A word about these cooperatives. Radical phrases such as the "cooperative commonwealth" are imbedded in their constitutions and declarations of principles. But with the possible exception of the Finnish cooperatives in northwestern Minnesota they seem to be anything but class conscious, and many of the cooperative leaders make a point of being non-political as a matter of principle. The Finns have a small string of cooperative stores centering in Cloquet, Minnesota, and in this region have more or less completed the circuit of producer and consumer cooperatives. For them cooperation has a social and cultural content derived from their old-country tradition; only with great difficulty is any such content injected into the American cooperatives by the educational program of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union. The Finns don't understand this. A while back, at a cooperative meeting, a disgusted Finn exclaimed: "You Americans think a cooperative is something to make money out of." That is pretty much what they do think. And in a Farmer-Labor state like Minnesota the non-political philosophy of the cooperatives raises some curious contradictions.

The cooperatives, especially the consumer cooperatives founded on the cooperative distribution of gasoline and oil, have been flourishing during the depression, and one does not wish in the least to discount their significance. At the moment an FERA investigator with a staff of nearly a hundred people is gathering statistical and other information concerning the cooperatives of the Northwest. As money-saving enterprises, and as economic arms of the Farmers' Union, they have contributed aid—especially the check-off of Farmers' Union dues—as well as embarrassment. But it is not unfair to say that the growth of the cooperatives cannot be taken, in and of itself, as an index of the spread of radicalism among the farmers.

The Farmers' Union Youth Movement—otherwise known as the "Juniors"—will be a better index when and if it really gets going. The Juniors were very much in the foreground at both the Wausau and the Sioux Falls conventions. They sang and recited and danced and produced the inevitable pageant with a stage populated by the personified abstractions of Truth, Justice, and so on. A chorus of farm boys in overalls and red bandannas sang:

> Don't go to the left,
> Don't go to the right,
> But right in the middle of the road.

Artistically, some of the numbers exhibited an unfortunate miscegenation of Broadway and the prairies. But others were pretty good, and on the whole the Juniors were impressive. The report of the Junior chairman states:

> If we are forced to abandon capitalism we must adopt another system of economics; there is but one path open to a free people, and that is the collectivism of cooperation. It is imperative that our children understand how to use the principles of cooperation as the only known defense against a dictatorship of capital, with its impending rule of terror, sabotage, and war.

What kind of radicalism is this, and is it likely to develop a philosophy, an organization, a program adequate to deal with the social and political situation facing the farmers? Only the future can answer.

Meanwhile it may be said that on the showing of the Sioux Falls convention the farmers are making progress. No new splits developed, and the national secretary reported

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the organization of new state unions in Alabama, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio, with a combined new membership of 40,000; also fifteen other states in process of organization. All factions represented at the convention united in opposing the crop-reduction program of the AAA and in demanding that when the government takes plebiscites of the farmers it give them a chance to vote for a cost-of-production as against a crop-reduction program.

But the most impressive thing about these farmers' meetings was the farmers who attended them. They are not peons yet; they are not as dumb as they like to call themselves; and most of them—the younger ones especially—have stopped being fundamentalists. There are better, more realistic ideas brewing under the surface than appear in the Farmers' Union "line." What with one thing and another, it looks like more trouble ahead for Secretary Wallace.

A Cross Section of Insecurity

By EVELYN SEELEY

Washington, January 7

WHILE the Seventy-fourth Congress was opening on Capitol Hill, another congress—the National Congress for Unemployment and Social Insurance—was opening in rambling old Washington Auditorium. Representative Ernest Lundeen of Minnesota, sponsor of the Workers' Bill for Unemployment and Social Insurance which this congress met to support, came, he said, from "the little Congress on Capitol Hill" to this, "the big congress." Certainly this "big congress," as one looked and listened, was a more dynamic and realistic cross-section of the country.

Twenty-six hundred industrial, agricultural, and professional workers had come from forty states, delegates from organizations representing millions of workers, to plan how to establish a new concept of social insurance—namely, that "continuity of average income, with an established minimum equal to a living standard, must be assured through governmental action." They were Socialists, Communists, Farmer-Laborites, Lovestonites, and people of no affiliation or philosophical category. There was, nevertheless, only one argument—inspired not by a political faction but by a young careerist—and only one threatened fight—between two individuals, and women at that. The Congress was, in fact, as many speakers said, the nucleus of the broadest united front workers had ever seen.

Delegates had come by train, bus, horseback, and on foot. The first man in from California had come, and must return, on $10 for total expenses. He said that the increasing discontent in California, manifested by last summer's general strike and by the great vote for Upton Sinclair, was an expression of the need for what he called "a real people's program." A farmer from Ohio grinned and said, "I rode in on a pig." Having no money to send him, his farmers' union had raffled off a neighbor's pig. He told how at last the farmers of his state had begun to organize for their own needs. A tall, lanky, sandy chap from a Wyoming ranch, member of the Farm Holiday Association, rolled in, with six Denver delegates from industrial unions, in a homestead shack mounted on a truck—its larder stocked with fried chicken and pie from the Wyoming ranch house and home-baked beans from Denver. He said his family, living on a ranch inherited from his grandfather and worked by his father and brothers, was holding its own but that all around him ranchers faced bleak deprivation. A gray-haired, eagle-beaked, deep-eyed boilermaker from Denver, a passenger in the homestead caravan, said: "I will fight to the bitter end for real unemployment insurance. Never can they get me to sign the Wagner bill. I have worked too hard for my Socialist and union cards for thirty-five years to let them force me to become a coward or a traitor to the workers." A bent little share-cropper from Virginia came with friends in a battered Ford. He said: "When my father died, he left me a team of mules but the mortgage people took them away from me. Then along come a fellow with a fine wagon and a team of mules and he could work the land. Now I got nothing." These are only a few samples to indicate the broad geographical range of the delegates: weather-beaten farmers, pale factory workers, big-muscled steel workers, sallow miners, bow-legged cowboys, broad-shouldered longshoremen, bearded architects, studious professors, fact-filled social workers, actors and writers and newspaper reporters; the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker; the doctor, the lawyer, and the union chief.

The congress made history because it was the first time professional workers had met with industrial and agricultural workers for a common need. It was the first time, in other words, that white-collar workers had expressed their new realization that their fundamental status is precisely the same as that of every other worker, that their traditional aloofness in the clouds of pure professional integrity did not protect them from suffering more seriously in proportion to their numbers than any other group, and that they too must organize for their economic security. They stated their position at a special meeting—as part of the congress—of the Interprofessional Association for Social Insurance, to which most professional groups represented belong and which all other professionals attended. They said:

> The professional worker's relatively privileged status is gone. He now knows unemployment, insecurity, hunger, want. More than half the architects, engineers, chemists, research and laboratory workers in this country have no work. Teachers, nurses, and government employees in general have been let out in increasing numbers. Musicians, artists, dentists, and physicians have suffered a steep decline in income because the great mass of people lack money to buy their services. . . . The numbers of all these groups are being constantly augmented by college graduates for whom there is no future under our present system.
>
> The professional worker . . . has been turning increasingly to the promotion of broad . . . groups whose orientation is frankly economic and which seek security for their members through collective action on specific issues and joint action with other workers' groups on common issues.

This was news to the labor world, news voiced by some of the best and most able persons in the professions. Seasoned trade-unionists may have looked on at first a bit skeptically, wondering if the professional people had come to see what the other half was like or if they did, in fact, mean business. They listened to Mary van Kleeck, head of

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the Interprofessional Association for Social Insurance, as she wound up a brilliant analysis of their joint concept of social insurance with these words:

> This address must close with an assurance to the workers of America that an increasing number of professional workers and technicians are ready to place at the disposal of the organized labor movement not only the technical, professional, and scientific knowledge which is needed for the solution of the nation's problems, but also the devotion and loyalty of a group to a movement which in all history is alone the source of progressive social change.

When she finished, the great audience rose to a man, cheered and whistled and applauded until even farmers' calloused hands were stinging.

This response, repeated in less degree as individual professional groups sent spokesmen to the platform, was construed by the professionals not so much as labor's recognition of the fact that the professionals had at last come over to it as labor's acceptance of the professionals as equals in realism.

Labor Notes

The President and Steel

COMING too late in the history of Section 7-a to be of much use, the recent election orders which the National Steel Labor Relations Board has directed against the United States Steel Corporation possess a purely academic interest. Hiding behind the puppet company union, the Steel Corporation has already projected the orders into the federal courts, where they will remain entangled in the red tape of the judicial process for many months. They cannot possibly come to a determinate issue, that is, to a review by the Supreme Court, before the Recovery Act, Section 7-a included, expires in mid-June. Why did the Steel Board wait six months before it sought to bring about a showdown on collective-bargaining referendums? The answer is simple. In his anxiety to promote labor-capital "truces," the President conveniently forgot all about the terms of the steel truce executed last summer. When he extended the iron and steel code on May 30, 1934—a week after the Amalgamated, its recognition demands rejected, began to prepare for a strike—the President pledged his word that he would shortly provide for Section 7-a elections in every unit of the industry. When William Green, on June 15, 1934, talked the Amalgamated out of the strike due to begin the very next day, he appeared in a quasi-official role and gave tacit assurances that the government was about to set true collective bargaining in motion. When the Steel Labor Board was created on June 28, 1934, the executive order conferred election power upon it and stipulated that majority rule should govern. By this time, however, the strike threat had died down, at least temporarily.

For half a year thereafter the Steel Labor Board refrained from exercising its theoretical election powers. Instead, it held hearings and tried to argue employers and the union into working out formulas of accommodation. By December, 1934, steel production was picking up at a brisk rate; a strike once again became possible. At this point the Administration intervened with proposals which denied point by point the terms of the original truce. Bind yourself to a new truce, the Amalgamated was urged; submit to proportional representation; permit compulsory arbitration; and agree to forgo election demands for the next six months. For once in its history the Amalgamated was clever enough to avoid the snares of the "national run-around." Moral suasion upon the workers having failed, the Steel Board proceeded to turn the feeble sanctions of the law, long overdue, upon the employers.

The steel strike, if it comes, will constitute the most violent labor explosion of the New Deal. The Administration has sidestepped any true showdown with the feudal barons of the steel mills. If union recognition is worth fighting for, the workers will have to carry on the fight by and for themselves.

Prodding the A. F. of L.

THE recent victory of the striking printers at the Altum Press in New York City centers attention on a labor situation which is distinctly unusual. The strike was conducted by the Independent Printing Employees, a new organization. For years New York newspaper and book printers have been organized in A. F. of L. craft locals. These have not striven seriously to unionize job-printing plants, which are difficult to approach on craft lines because they seldom employ more than one or two workers in each craft. Union books have been closed and initiation fees set high enough to discourage applicants. Craft officials justify such exclusiveness largely on the ground that, with many members unemployed, to admit more might ruin conditions in union shops. In truth, many union men, hiding their affiliation, now work in non-union shops at non-union wages. The cutthroat competition among "cockroach bosses" has jeopardized the status of organized and unorganized workers alike.

The Independent Printing Employees began more than a year ago to organize the unorganized. The union now has over 1,000 members. It holds that the protection of all must be based on universal organization and job expansion through a compulsory thirty-hour week. Its chief demand is for admission of the unorganized into the A. F. of L. "We are no dual union," says the I. P. E. president, D. S. Gordon. "We advocate solving the problem of the unorganized through a joint organizing drive with the Allied Printing Trades unions. Perhaps there is need for a special local embracing all crafts in the small shops. Thus far most of the unions have ignored the question, although some officials seem inclined to discuss it. The I. P. E. has been approached by an agent of an ink corporation whose credit control makes it a power in the industry. He proposed to make a company union of the I. P. E. Kicked downstairs by us, he is now organizing a company union to fight us and the A. F. of L. Unless the latter answers satisfactorily the questions we raise, there is grave danger of a union-smashing drive with further deterioration of wages and working conditions throughout the industry."

While knocking for admittance on the closed doors of the A. F. of L., the I. P. E. has been conducting a fight against the violators of the Graphic Arts code, which culminated in the Altum Press strike. The Altum Press workers filed a complaint against their employers through the I. P. E. more than ten months ago. They were given the usual national run-around from the code authorities to the Labor Compliance Board, from the Regional Labor Board to the State Labor Board. Finally, when one of their men was fired for union activities and refused reinstatement despite an order from the State Labor Board, a strike was called on December 11. In five days the employers came to terms with the union. As a result of its quick victory the I. P. E. has tremendously increased its influence among the printing employees, both organized and unorganized. It may yet compel the A. F. of L. to open its doors.

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Books, Drama, Films

Values and Manners for Radicals

Was Europe a Success? By Joseph Wood Krutch. Farrar and Rinehart. $1.

THE battle is on in the literary field. And it is a more fundamental controversy than that embodied in, let us say, Mike Gold's attack on the alleged superficialities and evasions of those who write pleasantly merely to entertain the leisure class. V. F. Calverton and Granville Hicks in "The Liberation of American Literature" and "The Great Tradition," respectively, have argued that the real fruition of American literature lies ahead with the full recognition of the class struggle, proletarian values, and the social revolution. John Strachey, in his "Literature and Dialectical Materialism," has gone even farther and contended that the significant writer of today must not only espouse the above dogmas but must also undergo an emotional conversion and submit to a complete mental discipline which closes his mind to any contrary suggestions.

Joseph Wood Krutch picks up the gauntlet for the liberals, albeit a very advanced group of liberals, and returns to the charge in an expanded version of his notable articles in *The Nation*. He uses a rapier rather than a bludgeon and reminds one of the intellectual subtlety of a Bayle arrayed against the Jesuits and other dogmatists of nearly three centuries ago. His little book is by all odds the most damaging criticism of the intellectual temper and literary manners of the exuberant Marxians and Communists that I know of in any language. Preserving the utmost good nature throughout, his analysis is utterly devastating as a study of the weaknesses in the undeviating radical temper and perspective.

The main contentions of the author are: (1) that the liberal differs from the dogmatic Communist mainly in seeking what appears to be immediately desirable rather than what is alleged to be "inevitable," according to the Marxian dialectic; and (2) that no social or economic system can be justified if it repudiates intellectual urbanity and civilized attitudes and tastes. By the latter he does not mean the rationalizations and obscurations of the predatory leisure class, but those intellectual and aesthetic standards and values which have been approved by civilized writers from Plato to Huxley and Bertrand Russell.

Many will be likely to hold that Mr. Krutch has been ill-advised in assuming to be writing as the champion of liberalism, for he apparently has little use for the optimistic temporizers who think that a cancer can be treated successfully with an ice pack or by cauterization. He comes far closer to writing a brief for civilized radicalism. I can see little in his book with which Bertrand Russell, for example, would differ very sharply. But he certainly sails into the 100 per cent dogmatic Marxians, especially the recent and fanatical converts to the new theology.

Mr. Krutch shows that Marx and Engels were just as sure that capitalism was on its last legs in 1848 as the *Daily Worker* is that the days of capitalism are numbered in 1935. He holds that there is nothing "inevitable" in history, and that the class struggle may very well go on indefinitely if governments allow it to proceed with some fairness. The radicals appear to believe that bourgeois civilization must disappear root and branch and that we are in a "new Middle Ages" which will prove to be the transition to the proletarian Utopia. The liberal, Mr. Krutch compares to Plato and the radical to Tertullian:

> He [the liberal intellectual] may even be convinced that the economic system of the modern world has outlived its day and cannot possibly last much longer. But even granting the possibility that the most radical radicals are right in their main contentions, he feels himself on surer ground in asserting that, however right they may be in their conclusions, both their thinking and their writing certainly lack all those secondary virtues which are commonly implied when we speak of anything or anyone as "civilized." The thinking and the writing are dogmatic, harsh, and intolerant. They are full of an intense and burning hatred for that urbanity, detachment, and sense of fair play which make thinking amiable and which liberals pretend, at least, to admire.

Some of the best sections in the book are those in which Mr. Krutch compares the contemporary "reds" at length with the early Christian controversialists—with their mystical faith, their belief that the slightest questioning is blasphemous, their fierce hates, their intolerance, and their insistence upon 100 per cent acquiescence in the most minute phases of the creed. In their deification of the worker they seem to Mr. Krutch much like Rousseau and his apotheosis of the noble savage. He has little relish for the radical belief that there can be no art for art's sake—that the artists must be "in uniform," to use Max Eastman's phrase, and must make art and literature a vehicle of proletarian propaganda and technique. He also chides the radicals for their inconsistency in fiercely attacking international capitalistic war and in the same breath glorifying the proletarian class war which they allege to be impending.

How shall one assess the outcome of Mr. Krutch's joust with the radical writers? My own prejudices are all with his argument. Urbanity has appealed to me as the highest of human virtues—one Montaigne is worth an army of Loyolas or John Calvins. I would much prefer resolute gradualism to revolution in economic reconstruction if it were feasible. But there seems pathetically little real evidence in the Western world that gradualism has any strength or prospects, especially now that the New Deal has petered out and become a mere bid for the cooperation of the moguls of predatory finance and the "captains" of exploitative business, mainly on their own terms.

One contention does not need Karl Marx to back it up, and that is that a man must eat before he can have any mind or art or urbanity. It is becoming ever more evident that capitalism neither can nor will feed its sheep. It begins to look as though revolution, though not necessarily a bloody one, is the sole way in which the economic requirements of a civilized society can be assured in any reasonably complete or permanent way.

Some will doubtless feel that the outcome of Mr. Krutch's book is encouragement of a profound pessimism: capitalism is economically hopeless and communism is today intellectually barbarous—as is also militant capitalism in the form of fascism. The civilized man is intellectually all dressed up with no place to go. Perhaps the best way of resolving the dilemma is to regard Mr. Krutch as writing not so much a refutation of, or direct attack upon, the basic principles of economic radicalism as a most powerful and engaging argument for better intellectual manners and sounder aesthetic values on the part of contemporary radicals.

There is some basis for this view in Mr. Krutch's own argument, for he points out clearly the fallacy of American radicals in their slavish aping of Russian communism, which had to adopt methods suitable to a backward and barbarous culture that does not exist in Western Europe or the United States. There may be no real need for American Communists

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to adopt with the most abject intellectual servility the repulsive, if necessary, intellectual harshness and brutality of Russian radicalism today. American radicalism will make headway among those who count here just in proportion as it makes its appeal in terms that do not repel every man with any intellectual subtlety or spirit of fair play. Moreover, and this is a point which Mr. Krutch might wrestle with in a new edition, the advanced technology of the Western nations might permit so rapid and easy a transition to communism that the abysmal "dark ages" which Mr. Krutch fears would hardly be perceptible. There is no reason why economic reason and justice must of necessity be harnessed to intellectual barbarism.

HARRY ELMER BARNES

Unemployment Insurance in Great Britain

The British Attack on Unemployment. By A. A. C. Hill, Jr., and Isador Lubin. The Brookings Institution. $3.

SO much unmerited censure and unearned praise have been bestowed on the unemployment-insurance system of Great Britain that only the expert can describe it as less than a mythological wonder. It is far from perfect, even with the reforms introduced in the Act of 1934, and its critics, had they been wise, might have flooded this country with far more accurate derogations than they did. But they condemned it in many particulars for what was its strength, and ignored its inestimable service to Britain during the depression. Most discussion has been a debate not on the system but on the advisability of any kind of insurance whatever. Now that unemployment has become a major political fact in America, no longer to be hidden simply by being unmentioned, the British system of insurance deserves close study as the fruit of human experience from which much is to be learned. The first lesson, and one which Washington may well consider first, is that the establishment of unemployment insurance is a long, intricate, and experimental process. Even after thirteen years of depression the British have found answers for only the simplest of their problems.

Mr. Hill and Mr. Lubin have written a terse history and description of the British experiment, rounded out with a valuable critique. They like the contributory basis in Britain and do not foresee any advantage in changing it, though they might mention that such men as Snowden and Lloyd George now regret that contributions were taken from labor. Their chief criticisms are that the labor exchanges need to be much more effective, that five million workers, nearly all good insurance risks, are not covered and do not help bear the cost of the scheme, and that rates of contribution, being by age and sex, are not as satisfactory as if made according to income. They also point out the defect that insurance is against time lost, instead of income lost. The reader may be surprised to learn that the cost of the system to industry, paying roughly a third of the bill, has been an average of $75,000,000 a year, or 1.6 per cent of the industrial wage bill, an extraordinarily cheap protection against civil unrest. The reader, too, will be reminded that the British have made no real effort to reduce unemployment by public works, confining their spending for this end to the years before the crisis of 1931. The book should be in the hand of every Congressman and legislator who must vote this year on bills which launch the kindred experiment of insurance in America, not because the British system is a pattern, but because this lucid analysis gives a realistic measure of the scope of the problem.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

New Lyrics for Old

Permit Me Voyage. By James Agee. Yale University Press. $2.

TO take exception first to four of the pieces in this book, Epithalamium, Chorale, Ann Garner, and Dedication: the first two are exercises, logical attempts for a young, experimenting poet to make, able as such, but more interesting as the data of poetry than as successful poetical statements. Ann Garner, it is said, was written while Agee was still in school, which is explanation, not excuse. Emotionally and factually it is a bit of back-to-the-bulls-and-Jeffers, a trial in blank verse without distinction, again data. The inclusion of Dedication was made, I imagine, in self-defense, precipitated by the current fashion of reviewers to label a man by his social conscience, national fervor, primitive sensuality, everything but by his achievement in handling his medium. Its interest, besides that to be found in the objects of its tribute, in the information that the author believes in God and pays homage to certain men and women living and dead, lies in its affirmation of positive Christian—not here a synonym for Aryan—virtues, of the complexity and paradox of man's character and institutions, of the dignity of man, of the threat of the evil that lurks in high place and the benightedness among the lowly. In such affirmation is a restatement of certain observations not now fashionable, which Agee insists are worthy and valid. Yet again these are data, those data of belief and emotion which Archibald MacLeish, in his preface to the book, warns us about mistaking for art.

Agee's art is in the short poems at the beginning of the volume, in the title poem ending the volume, and in the sonnets. Admiration for them increases with rereading, admiration for the firm dexterity of their technique, for the right and individual choice of the words, for the true and ably ordered sound of syllables and lines. It is emotive verse, dependent on the correct descriptive word, on the implication in the arrangement of those words, and not on the final metaphor. It is sentient, and its sentiency is pointed with active reason and humor, which, as in an occasional phrase, bring short echoes, if you like, of the early seventeenth century and of some contemporaries. But the suggestion of derivation is never derogatory or harmful when, as with Agee, its impression is cut short by a transformation essentially the poet's own.

So with his music: his lyrics have the same functional grace and movement, the same clear melody that English poetry had when it was by descent and practice nearer performance on musical instruments or by the human voice. There is nothing, however, borrowed from the other art and imposed upon the lines, no confusion of material, nothing that is not a natural property of the words themselves, no artificial use of liquids and gutturals to fabricate a counterpoint, a cadence, a rhythm that does not actually belong to poetry.

In censure it may be wished that Agee would permit more detail in his poems. They are closed to it now, confined by what are probably his reservations about the uses and purpose of poetry, but this restriction in attitude—not a limitation in perception—makes one wonder in what ways his future verses can differ without repetition from these. At the moment his talent is well fitted, well exercised, but it could be loosened without lessening its effect. His perceptions are especially sensitive to the comedy and sorrow of living, to the good and need of love, to the year's changes into seasons, to the fresh newness of that old brawl, man versus nature. In the shorter lyrics this gamut stretches from the gentle "I loitered weeping with my bride for gladness" to the lusty Happy Hen. It

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is more formalized in the sonnet sequence, which is also a cycle, an autobiography. For the irrelevantly curious, there is no invocation to the masses, nor, as a corrective, is there retreat. There is a firm new lyric gift approaching maturity with strenuous precedents self-imposed.

FLORENCE CODMAN

The Power Theory of Politics

Political Power. By Charles E. Merriam. Whittlesey House. $3.

THE most significant work in the entire field of political science at the present moment is probably being done at the University of Chicago. Here alone there is adequate recognition that the problem of the power appetite is one which neither bourgeois nor Marxist political theorists have done more than evade. Peculiarly the Marxists have fallen down over it. Professor T. V. Smith has just produced a fascinating book on the philosophy of the problem, of which one can say that if the kill takes place in the twilight of skepticism, the hunt is an absorbing pursuit. Professor Lasswell's forthcoming book may be of momentous importance to the technical student. The present work is the second volume of this trilogy. It discusses such issues as "the birth of power," not without attention to psychology, the reasons why power is regarded with repugnance by moralists, the significance of propaganda, and others of equal interest.

Machiavelli's "Prince" has been called a manual for practicing diplomats. Marx wrote a quarto, and Lenin thirty volumes, as a practical manual for the class war. This book also is a "manual of power." When Signor Mussolini reads, in Professor Merriam's book, "It is important that leaders possess some facility in invention," I do not doubt that he will concur. But I cannot feel convinced that Mussolini is likely to consult Professor Merriam's collection of data as a *vade mecum* for the attainment of sovereign rule. Its statements lack the precision that recognizes that "le détail c'est tout."

Professor Merriam has a singularly honest and unprejudiced mind. He approaches his subject with a proper preference for description rather than for premature and pretentious dogmatism. He even seems to feel that there is scientific virtue in the absence of definition. Thus the word "power" itself—not to speak of the word "political"—is haunted to the end with an ambiguity between technological power and the appetite for personal power. At least Professor Merriam has none of the chastity-imperative in confronting the allurements of power that characterized Lord Acton. He concludes with something like a mystical paean to the "emergent trend of power" molding the new world, coupled with a hesitant proviso that these "conflicting controls . . . sweeping on" had better be guided by intelligence.

The most valuable parts of this experimental book are in the indication of the nexus between "conditional anarchy" and Marxist revolution; the statement of the issue between the expert society and the free society; the description of the role of technological change in the brave new world; and the suggestion that the study of the method of politics, and of the uniformities or laws that have been revealed in the conduct of revolution after revolution in our own times, is more important for the scientist than the question of which brutal group actually achieves power. The laws of human nature are mightier even than dictators and condition their success. It is for us to serve, by patient study, this nature if we would ultimately control it. This suggestive book will be remembered among the pioneer works toward that end of social control.

GEORGE E. G. CATLIN

The Career of Alfred Stieglitz

America and Alfred Stieglitz. A Collective Portrait. Edited by Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Dorothy Norman, Paul Rosenfeld, and Harold Rugg. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.50.

"THIS book," write the editors in a short, pertinent preface, "is not a collection of tributes, it is not a symposium of opinions, it is not a compilation of facts about a man. The life of Alfred Stieglitz has been lived in active relation with the world; his work has been in the deepest sense a communal work. This book is an attempt to express the nature of the career of Alfred Stieglitz by being, itself, in spirit and form, a communal work, a work organic with its subject." The volume is divided into two parts. The first of these presents the body of the subject in historical and biographical terms. Part Two treats less personally of Stieglitz and is more ideological. Dr. Harold Rugg evaluates Stieglitz's place within "the Great Transition," the forty years of drastic social change between the 1890's and the present time, in which "the First Industrial Revolution catapulted into the Second," and "the wasteful Machine Age passed quickly over into the efficient Power Age"; Dr. Evelyn Howard and Waldo Frank discuss his relationship to the philosophy of science and to the organic evolution of mankind. In a special section labeled Variations on the Theme there appear memoirs of personal relationships with Stieglitz in both lyrical and narrative form, followed by an essay on the machine by Paul Strand and a discussion, technically interesting, however obscure, on the aesthetic significance of photography, by Evelyn Scott.

Stieglitz was born at the end of the Civil War, when photography was still in its prenatal stages. When he was ten years old, however, and was spending the summer with his parents at Lake George, he became a regular visitor to the laboratory of the village tintyper, where he naively probed the mysteries of light striking a sensitive plate. As a university student he switched from mechanical engineering to photochemistry and in 1887 won his first recognition in an amateur competition held in London. About four months after his matriculation from the Berlin Polytechnic a camera with a single lens resting in the window of a shop in the Klosterstrasse held his attention. He bought the camera, studied it, experimented with it. He was dissatisfied with the explanation of his instructor that in photography compromises are inevitable, that the faithful reproduction of a plaster Juno with a black cloth is impossible. He purchased a modern camera and took up the dry plate, which had recently appeared in the market. He improvised a dark room. He was told that the camera could photograph only in daylight. He shut himself and his camera in a cellar "lit by a weak electric lamp and occupied by a disused dynamo. He focused the camera, uncapped the lens; and after an exposure lasting for twenty-four hours, finds he has secured a perfect negative of the machine . . . deliberately, he is pushing the camera beyond accredited frontiers."

In 1890 he helped reestablish the New York Society of Amateur Photographers, which was considering the project of transforming itself into a bicycle club; he edited their magazine *Camera Notes*, exhibited photographs demonstrating the human friendliness of the machine, and recreated an interest in the medium. In 1903 he resigned from *Camera Notes* and founded *Camera Work,* the quarterly organ of Photo-Secession, the American branch of an international photography movement of which he was considered the international leader. In the unanimous opinion of all critics, *Camera Work,* where Stieglitz championed the work of Eugene, Strand, Steichen,

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White, and many others, remains the greatest periodical of photography ever published. He then founded and maintained the famous 291 Gallery at 291 Fifth Avenue, and in 1908 and 1911, respectively, exhibited the paintings of Matisse and Cézanne for the first time in the Western Hemisphere, as well as the first Rodin drawings, Picassos, and Toulouse-Lautrecs. Since then he has devoted his energies almost exclusively to presenting the work of John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Arthur Dove. Young men and women, artists and others, continued to seek out Stieglitz. Many of these, after viewing his photographs, talking with him, attending the exhibitions, were able to go back enriched to their own work in artistic and other fields.

Most of the contributions in the first two sections serve to indicate, within the sequence of history, and ideologically, Stieglitz's place in our civilization. The most distinguished essays are in Parts One and Two, by Lewis Mumford, Ralph Flint, Harold Rugg, Evelyn Howard, and Waldo Frank. The Variations on the Theme, except for the two critical studies by Elizabeth McCausland and Harold Clurman, the seemingly superficial but actually penetrating observations by Victoria Ocampo, and Sherwood Anderson's well-planned lyric prose, are far inferior.

"America and Alfred Stieglitz" is an unusual experiment, and a success. Despite its 120 illustrations, a special section at the end of the volume, I do not recommend it for cursory reading. The book's implications are manifold—and worthy of the sensitive reader's closest scrutiny.

ERIC ESTORICK

Drama

Heartbreak House

THE brilliant and instantaneous success of "The Petrified Forest" (Broadhurst Theater) need surprise no one. Writing so suave and acting so ingratiating would be enough to insure the popularity of a play far less interesting in itself than this one happens to be, and even now, indeed, they make it difficult to be sure just how substantially good it really is. Mr. Sherwood, the author, has something to say and he is obviously in earnest, despite the light grace of his manner. He is also, however, too accomplished a craftsman to ask indulgence from any Broadway audience, since he knows the tricks of his trade and has a witty fluency quite sufficient to make something out of nothing. He could fool us to the top of our bent if that was what he wanted to do, and we may take it for granted that at least half of his delighted audience will like the play for reasons which have little to do with its theme. Not for the moment am I meaning to suggest that he is wrong to use his talents or that a serious play is the better for being uncouth or clumsy. I am saying only that "The Petrified Forest" could succeed upon its superficial merits alone, and that one has some difficulty in deciding whether or not one has been charmed into granting it virtues deeper than any it really has.

To begin with, the play is quite capable of standing on its feet as a simple comedy melodrama of a familiar type. The lonely filling station on the edge of the desert has been used before, and so has the band of fleeing desperadoes which descends upon it to take charge temporarily of the assorted persons who happen to find themselves there. In itself all this is merely sure-fire theatrical material, and so is the fresh and innocent rebelliousness of the budding young girl, who happens in this case to be the proprietor's daughter. Add, for love interest, a penniless young man who has made a failure at writing, and there is still little to distinguish the play from very ordinary stage fare. Imagine further that the dialogue is bright and the characterization crisply realistic. You have now a play admirably calculated to please anyone intelligent enough to prefer the routine when it happens to be well performed. What is more, this routine play can easily be detached from all the meanings which Mr. Sherwood has given it. It is complete in itself and it is, as I remarked before, quite capable of standing alone.

Yet for all this, it is plain enough that this play is double and that the familiar situations may be taken, not at their face value, but as symbols. Solidly realistic as the filling station is, it is obviously intended also as a place out of space and time where certain men can meet and realize that they are not only individuals but phenomena as well. Though there is no obvious patterning, no hint of plain allegory even for an instant, the characters represent the protagonists in what the author conceives to be the Armageddon of society. The young man is that civilized and sophisticated intelligence which has come to the end of its tether; the young girl is aspiration toward that very sensitivity and that very kind of experience which he has not ceased to admire but which have left him bankrupt at last. About them are the forces with which they realize they cannot grapple: raucous bluster in the commander of the American Legion, dead wealth in the touring banker, primitive anarchy resurgent in the killer and his gang. By whatever grotesque name the filling station may call itself, and no matter how realistic the hamburger being served across its lunch counter as "today's special" may be, the desert tavern is Heartbreak House, a disintegrating microcosm from which the macrocosm may be deduced. And the moral—or at least the only one which the only fully articulate person in the play can deduce—is a gloomy one. What he calls Nature, and what a poet once called Old Chaos, is coming again. We thought that she was beaten. We had learned her laws and we seemed to manipulate her according to our will. But she is about to have her way again. She cannot get at us with floods and pestilence because we are too clever for that. But she has got us through the mind and the spirit. Intelligence can no longer believe in anything, not even in itself. It can only stand idly by with refinement and gallantry and perception while the world is taken over by the apes once more. And so when the bullets of the posse begin to shatter the windows, the young man and the young woman drop to the floor in each other's arms. It is a symbol of all they know or can still believe in, but they have no illusion that it is enough.

When Cervantes had finished the first part of "Don Quixote," he was visited, so he says, by a friend to whom he confessed his inability to describe in any Introduction what his aim in the book might be; and upon this the friend replied that he should not worry about either explanations or meanings. "Strive," said he, "that the simple shall not be wearied and the great shall not disprove it." One can hardly deny that the method worked in that particular instance, and it works again in the case of Mr. Sherwood's play. I have, to be sure, a lingering feeling that there are dangers inherent in the effort to write on two levels at once, and some scruples about accepting as symbols things as familiar in their literal use as some which "The Petrified Forest" employs. There is an unresolvable ambiguity at times, not only concerning the meaning but also concerning the emotional tone, and the melodrama as such sometimes gets in the way of the intellectual significance. But such objections are purely intellectual. Mr. Sherwood has achieved the almost impossible feat of writing a play which is first-rate theatrical entertainment and as much more than that as one cares to make it. He has also had the good fortune to secure in Leslie Howard the ideal performer for the difficult

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central role. Mr. Howard has all the charm which the part calls for and yet he remains always masculine and convincing. He is also very generous with his fellow-players and permits Peggy Conklin, as the girl, and Humphrey Bogart, as the killer, to give very fine accounts of themselves.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Films

Too Good to Be True

IT is some weeks now since Messrs. Covici-Friede brought out what they announced as "the first full-length scenario for an actual talking-picture production to be published in book form as a serious example of the craft." In the meantime, it has been possible both to read the script of "The Mighty Barnum" as written by Gene Fowler and Bess Meredyth and to view the production based on it by Walter Lang, the director, with the help of Wallace Beery, Adolphe Menjou, and Janet Beecher in the principal roles. One has had time, in other words, to meditate a little on the claims set forward in the statement just quoted. That the first part of the statement is true is probably most convincingly evidenced by the rumor that this scenario in book form was completely sold out on the first day of publication. Undoubtedly many among the thousands of untutored poets of the cinema throughout the land availed themselves immediately of the hint on the dust-cover that the book might provide "a reliable and highly practical guide to their endeavors." The insertion of the word "talking," however, just saves the publishers from an inaccuracy. For several full-length scenarios for silent films are to be found scattered through the various little film magazines, including the famous Eisenstein version of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy." And one must not forget such attempts to apply the scenario form to the novel as Jules Romains's "Donogoo-Tonka" and Blaise Cendrars's "L'Or," both of which appeared more than ten years ago. But Messrs. Covici-Friede are quite justified in claiming honors for the talking picture; and it is only to the last few words in their announcement that one might object. Mr. Fowler's script is bright, lively, mildly amusing, but not, by any extension of the critical tolerance, a *serious* example of anything. It is all too evident that this writer whose principal talent is for the debunking wisecrack, is too busy poking fun at the whole idea of a Hollywood picture about Barnum to be much concerned with giving us the truth about Barnum and his time. This is, as a matter of fact, the trouble with the picture from beginning to end. Nobody was prepared to take Barnum with enough seriousness, that is, as a human being, to make him seem even mildly credible to a contemporary audience. It was not necessary to make Barnum consistently ludicrous; more of his absurdity could have been left to the audience to discover for itself; the real problem as always was to impose a decent restraint on life—to make this more than life-size creature seem not too good to be true. But both Mr. Fowler, in the lines and situations which he contrived, and Wallace Beery, in the unrelieved exaggeration of his performance, were carried away by their subject. Everything was possible in a picture about Barnum, and everything is put in. Let us not fail to mention the nauseating sequence of the love scenes between Barnum and the Bearded Lady, which terminates, of course, with Barnum's burning the seat of his trousers on the lady's curling iron. It is to be hoped that the neophytes who have bought the script of this picture will learn the proper use of such terms as "close shot," "sound track," and "dissolve." But it is also to be hoped that they will not be deceived into believing that it is "a serious example of the craft."

"Evergreen" (Radio City Music Hall) is also, in its way, too good to be true: a musical film from the British studios which yet manages to sustain its "penny-colored" mood very successfully from beginning to end. For this phenomenon various circumstances are responsible—an ingenious plot situation by Benn Levy, the music and lyrics of Rodgers and Hart, an American camera man, and Miss Jessie Matthews. Concerning Miss Matthews the report must be made that she can sing, dance, and act with almost equal distinction; that she possesses a quality unlike that of any other musical star on the English or American stage; and that this quality belongs quite definitely to an earlier period than our own. The period, to be exact, is the Edwardian, which happens also to be the period evoked for us in the opening sequences of the film. But Miss Matthews has about her a suggestion of the early Anna Held, as that *fin de siècle* symbol of Continental wickedness exists for us in old photographs of the theater, which she would probably keep in any costume or role.

WILLIAM TROY

Contributors to This Issue

JACK FISCHER is an English journalist now engaged in research work in economics at Oxford. He has been in the Saar for the past month and has written articles on the plebiscite for the London *New Statesman and Nation.*

B. H. HAGGIN is the music critic of the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle.*

JAMES RORTY, author of "Our Master's Voice: Advertising," is making an extended tour through the United States gathering material on social and economic conditions. He has published a series of articles in the New York *Post* and will contribute additional articles to *The Nation.*

EVELYN SEELEY, a New York newspaperwoman, has been editor of the woman's page of the New York *World-Telegram* and feature writer for the Scripps-Howard papers and the United Press.

HARRY ELMER BARNES, a member of the editorial department of the Scripps-Howard newspapers, is the author of "A History of Social Thought" and "History of Western Civilization," to name the most recent of his many books on sociology and history.

FLORENCE CODMAN is the head of the publishing house, Arrow Editions.

GEORGE E. G. CATLIN, a member of the Department of Government at Cornell University, is the author of "Preface to Action."

Coming Soon

The Hitlerites on Hitlerism

A Collection of Gems from the Nazi Press Selected and Classified

by John Gunther

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